

THE CANADIAN FORUM

A Monthly Journal of Literature and Public Affairs



Conditions in Rural Saskatchewan
Canada and This Next War
Law-Breakers' Commune
Midsummer Madness
Red Vienna



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A PRE-ELECTION SESSION?

THE Liberals are hoping and praying for a federal general election this summer; and Mr. King, who has apparently gone into training for the event, started their campaign by a four hours speech in Parliament. Mr. Bennett was reported as stating that no election was coming, but his statement is not so clear when it is reread. And all the actions of the government point to an early election. They are going to spend money on public works, and this is the time-honoured sign in Canada of a coming election. The sum to be spent is far too small to have an effective influence in helping employment, but it is enough to collect some tidy campaign funds from the contractors who will benefit from it, and to provide a good many jobs for the politically needy in a good many constituencies. The Stevens committee is empowered to investigate so many subjects that it is unlikely to investigate any of them properly, especially as little preliminary work has been done by technical experts before it starts proceedings. But it is nicely designed to rally the small business men of all kinds behind the government—the retail merchants suffering from the competition of chain and department stores, the little industrialists forced to manufacture at prices dictated by large buyers, the producers of primary products exploited by the processing interests. By a happy coincidence many of the leading figures whom Mr. Stevens denounced in his now famous speech happen to be Liberals in politics. If his committee adds a few spectacular revelations about the piracies of our leading investment bankers it will also rally behind the government all the little investors who have been fleeced in recent years. And all these things put together might serve to lull the public into a momentary forgetfulness of their resentment against the Great Man who has spent the last three years preaching his doctrines of thrift and the iron heel, telling young men how blessed it is to be born poor, and upbraiding the unemployed for being too choosy about their life work.

OUR FOREIGN POLICY

ON February 12 Mr. Luchkovich, supported by Mr. Woodsworth, moved in Parliament 'that in the opinion of this House the whole subject of the foreign policy of Canada be referred to the Committee on Industrial and International Relations

for study and report.' Thereupon Mr. Bennett treated the House to one of the most arrogant and also preposterous performances of which even he has ever been guilty. He denounced the motion as being the negation of Responsible Government. He declared that no government could be told by a committee meeting in some room what its policy was to be. As if there were no other committees sitting in rooms in the Parliament Buildings and investigating questions of public policy! He also asserted that there was sufficient opportunity to discuss foreign policy when the estimates of the Department of External Affairs came up in the House, although it is notorious that a hurried debate on these estimates at the fag end of a session affords no real chance for an adequate treatment of our foreign relations at all. The plain fact is that under present conditions Parliament has no real control of this vital department of policy whatever, and we are likely to drift into the next war as ignorantly as we did into the war of 1914. Mr. Bennett's predecessors in the office of Prime Minister have been as reluctant to take the House into their confidence on foreign policy as he is, but they were not so brutally frank in their autocracy. The collection of platitudinous generalities about peace and disarmament in which he defined our foreign policy shows either that he takes no interest in these problems and can therefore only talk rhetorically about them—and this is the more likely alternative—or that he doesn't think it worth while to tell the country what is going on. A few days before this debate of February 12 his one-time bosom friend and party lieutenant, Senator McRae, recommended that Canada should retire from the League in order to keep out of the next European war. The Senator did not make clear whether he wishes us also to retire from the British Empire—a step which would probably be more effective in keeping us out of European war entanglements. But what does Mr. Bennett think of this McRae proposition? And what does Mr. King, that champion of parliamentary liberties, think of Mr. Bennett's treatment of Parliament in the matter of foreign policy?

WHEAT

THE wheat agreement by which our exports of wheat are limited to some 200,000,000 bushels has the support of the three prairie provincial governments and of the wheat pools. That it was highly desirable to forestall a ruinous competitive

dumping of wheat by the main exporting countries upon already glutted markets would seem to be beyond discussion. The weakness of the agreement from the Canadian point of view seems to be that we have committed ourselves to a very definite restriction upon our freedom of action, while the importing countries do not in return commit themselves to anything concrete beyond vague promises not to encourage further expansion of wheat acreage (but will they, and will Britain, definitely discourage it?) and to reduce their import duties (by how much?) when the price of wheat has reached a point which it is not at all likely to reach. But the principle that world production should be adjusted to world consumption is surely right; and the wheat agreement is the first example of the kind of international planning to which we shall have to come for all commodity exchanges if we are ever to escape from the chaos of competitive nationalism with which the world is cursed at present. How wheat production in Canada is to be regulated is a question to which our governments have as yet no answer. But the difficulty of finding an answer need not surely condemn us forever to the insanity of growing all the wheat we can grow regardless of possible markets.

* * *

THE Liberal party, however, has had its hand forced by its leading organ, the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which is longing for a return to the delights of nineteenth century *laissez-faire*; and Mr. King, following his followers as usual, has condemned the wheat agreement without qualification. Here we have a clear-cut issue between the government on one side with the qualified support of the C.C.F. forces, and the nineteenth century romantics on the other. And the whole economic future of Canada depends upon the decision. Would it be asking too much of the Liberals to answer two questions? (1) Granting that Canada will suffer a severe setback if we accept the figure of 200,000,000 bushels as a permanent standard for our wheat exports, where do they see a market for much more than this in the immediate future? (2) How far do they propose to lower our tariffs in order to open the way to those mythical foreign markets of which they are always talking? Of course no answer to these questions will be forthcoming now that a general election is in the air. The problems of the prairie wheat farmer will be bedevilled by the excitements of politics for the next few months. We can therefore only recommend our readers to turn to two sober and enlightening discussions of this topic which have recently appeared. One is an article in the January number of the *University of Toronto Quarterly* by Dr. D. A. MacGibbon of the Board of Grain Commissioners, entitled 'The Wheat Problem.' The other is a speech delivered by Dean A. M. Shaw of the University of Saskatchewan at the Western Canada Live Stock Union meeting in Moose Jaw on January 18; it is entitled 'Alternatives to Grain Growing in the Prairie Provinces.'

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SIGNIFYING NOTHING

WHEN Mr. Stevens has fully investigated the mass buying tactics of large retail firms, and has substantiated all the charges he has made and a number of others he neglected to make, what will he do about it? What action can anyone expect from a Bennett government, or a King government, or from the firms themselves? The stores are merely the most efficient exponents of the working of a competitive system. That system is based on the principle of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest. Only by following such a principle can a firm hope to make a profit; and only by making a profit can it justify its existence as an independent concern. In these circumstances, no government which pins its faith to a competitive system based on profits can be expected to take any drastic action. It is true that the Roosevelt policies offer something of a precedent for an effort to combine the continuance of the profit system with the conception of a minimum standard of living. But it is not yet certain that such a combination is possible, or that, even if possible, it can be assured by government regulation. As for the chance that any firm may altruistically refrain from driving a hard bargain simply because it might involve sweat-shop conditions, the answer is in the insistence of the average stockholder on his yearly dividend, no matter what the methods used to acquire it. If the firms showed any temper of reform, the first place to exercise it would be in ameliorating the lot of their own employes, whose wages, hours, and conditions of work form a glaring commentary on the idealistic utterances of some of our most eminent retailers. No essential change is possible without a complete change of system. In the meantime, the suspicion will linger that the attack on retail methods is inspired rather by some other exploiting class than by any real interest in the mass of the exploited.

SOUND MONEY

THE way in which the air is filled with straws and kites and trial balloons begins to suggest to the acute observer that some action on the currency situation is definitely in preparation. Specifically, the issue of a hundred million dollars in paper currency is a prospect which, at the time of writing, seems likely to be realized in the near future. It is truly remarkable with what calmness and courage the public of this great Dominion is facing the prospect. For three years a measure of this kind has been advocated by at least a section of the C.C.F. and combatted with all the weight of Conservative appeal to panic. The horrid example of the German mark has done noble service in the cause, and the cry of 'sound money'—whatever that means—has been echoed and re-echoed in the press and on the platform and in Parliament. Yet it is safe to say that when the issue actually does take place it will be hailed as a constructive and statesman-like measure—much the same reception as the National Government in England met when it went off gold after having been put in office to maintain the gold standard. It is merely another example of circumstances altering cases. A radical party which talks inflation is merely a group of wild theor-

ists with no practical experience, who would bury this great country under a flood of worthless paper. But a Conservative government—whose advisers, in their experience and practical wisdom, have brought this country to its present peak of happiness and prosperity—will of course not be adopting inflation when it starts the printing presses; it will merely be providing us with more and more sound money.

SOCIAL FASCISM

THE recent disturbances in Austria clearly demonstrate the inadequacy of many of our current terms and definitions. What, for instance, is a Socialist, and what is the purpose of Socialism? In Austria an armed struggle is taking place between three nominally socialist organizations, and at least two of these bodies are more interested in supporting a decaying capitalism than they are in producing a new social order. The three parties concerned are the Nazis (German National Socialist Party), the supporters of Dolfuss (Austrian Christian Socialists), and the Austrian Social-Democratic Party. Behind the scenes, the wires are still being pulled by the big banking and industrial fraternity, but superficially the fight is taking place between three groups, all of which profess to be guided by 'socialist' principles. In North America we have not advanced beyond the kindergarten stage, where socialism is regarded as the inveterate foe of capitalism, but in Europe, where the politicians have become more sophisticated, a new hybrid is emerging—the social-fascist. It is more than a coincidence that all the important Fascist movements have been led by ex-socialists, pseudo-socialists, or demagogues who use socialist ideology to muddle the minds of their followers. Mussolini was a Socialist, Hitler calls himself a National Socialist, Dolfuss is a Christian Socialist, and even in the East, Chiang Kai Shek, the 'strong man' of China, started out as a true believer in the diluted socialism of Sun Yat Sen. Great Britain has not yet embraced Fascism, so it is not possible to include Ramsay MacDonald in this gallery of illustrious converts, but Mosley—who is the leader of the largest Fascist group in England—is, of course, an ex-socialist. Wherever the capitalist ship of state is in danger of foundering, the crew saves itself by launching the life-boats of social-fascism.

THE N.R.A. AND EMPLOYMENT

ONE of the acute questions which is beginning to emerge from the operation of the N.R.A. and allied institutions is the bearing of relief works upon the permanent employment situation. Already the proposal to wind up the temporary work undertaken by the Civil Works Administration has raised such an outcry that an extension of operations has been forced upon the government. The whole idea behind these temporary measures is that they are transitional institutions, and that the major steps in the recovery programme will soon place industry in a position to absorb the millions of men for whom the government has meanwhile provided employment, as well as the further millions for whom no place has yet been found. But this happy consummation is still far in the future; it is approaching far more slowly than was hoped;

and growing doubts as to whether it will ever be achieved raise the question of what will happen in such a case. Can the government afford to throw up its hands and let a new unemployment crisis develop? Or must it continue its effort to find work of some kind for the men for whom an over-expanded industry will have no further use in this generation? And in the latter case, what enterprises will the government undertake in order to provide the necessary employment? It will not be surprising if the administration, saddled with several millions of unwanted employees, will take over the handling of certain essential services which are at present in private hands. In other words, a wide programme of public relief may place the government in such a situation that it will be pushed a long way in the direction of state socialism by the sheer pressure of necessity.

THE B. N. A. ACT

AFTER four years of depression we appear to be reaching the point where it is possible to raise the question of amending our federal constitution without driving any of our constitutional pundits into hysterical outbursts about provincial rights. Fervent declarations about the 'Compact' of 1867, are no longer quite so frequent in our newspapers—though perhaps Premier Taschereau is only biding his time—and it is becoming more and more difficult for our Ottawa statesmen to sidestep some unpleasant responsibility by claiming that the matter is one which comes within the jurisdiction of the provinces. This time-honoured excuse for laziness is now apt to be met by a demand that our public men remove constitutional obstacles to action by amending the constitution. The public, in fact, are now very willing to be reminded that the Fathers of Confederation laid down the principle that 'in the Federation of the British North American provinces the system of government best adapted under existing circumstances to protect the diversified interests of the several Provinces and secure efficiency, harmony and permanency in the working of the union, would be a general government charged with matters of common interest to the whole country and local governments for the provinces charged with the control of local matters in their respective sections.' Any interest which since 1867 has become general and national in scope should be transferred to the care of the national government if we are to carry out the spirit of the original Confederation agreement.

The province which has always been most fearful about changes in our constitutional structure has, of course, been Quebec. The French Canadians were given certain guarantees as to their cultural rights in 1867, and they have always been afraid that if once we start making changes in the Act the process may continue until those rights may be endangered. So they have tended to insist on the unalterable nature of the federal pact; or, if they do not go this far, they have tended to look to the British Parliament as a partner in the federal pact, its function being to act as a guarantor of the rights of the minority. Any radical party in this country

must make it clear to the French that there is no desire to attack their cultural rights. The constitutional changes which radicals desire are such as will give the national government power to direct the national economic development; and it does not take much argument to demonstrate—if the French people can be persuaded to listen—that the interests which would be affected by such economic changes are not those of the racial and religious minority as such but only those of that part of the Province of Quebec which is located in the neighbourhood of St. James Street, Montreal.

While the timid Mr. King was in office he could always be frightened away from any proposal of constitutional changes by a cry of provincial rights. For he depended for half his seats in Parliament upon Liberal members from Quebec. After Mr. Bennett came into power he seemed to be in a similar predicament. For Mr. Ferguson joined with Mr. Taschereau in asserting with extreme bluntness and arrogance the right of the provinces to stop all constitutional change without their unanimous consent. This was the doctrine of the Ferguson memorandum which was handed to Mr. Bennett just as he was setting out for his first Imperial Conference in 1930. In those days Mr. Ferguson was the King-Maker who had just provided the Conservative party with its great majority from Ontario in the elections, and Mr. Bennett was watching his step very carefully.

But in due course Mr. Bennett proceeded to put Mr. Ferguson three thousand miles out of the way and to reign in his own right. Last summer at the Newmarket summer school he told his audience that he had never accepted the doctrine that the consent of all the provinces is necessary for constitutional amendment. Captious critics might wonder why he did not make this clear in 1930, but let it suffice that he has now made it clear. A greater than Ferguson having now spoken, the doctrine of the Ferguson memorandum becomes, so far as the Conservative party is concerned, simply an historical curiosity of merely antiquarian interest. It never had any ground in historical precedents. The Conservative party in Ontario, moreover, seems to have given up the Ferguson stand-pat attitude on the constitution, since Mr. Henry has recently been talking about the need for constitutional changes and in his remarks seemed to be thinking especially of unemployment insurance.

The new third party, the C.C.F., has of course been in favour of constitutional amendment from the start. The whole basis of its argument is the necessity of strengthening the national government so that it shall have the requisite power to direct our national economic development. Plank No. 9 of the Regina platform makes this clear, but it carefully avoids committing the party to any clear statement of how amendments are to be carried out in future. In fact, on this point the draftsmen of the C.C.F. platform show a skill in sidestepping difficult questions which is worthy of the leaders of the old parties.

The Liberals under Mr. King are keeping very mum on constitutional matters just now. Mr. King is not going to be troubled with any chart for his guidance during the next term of office if he can possibly avoid it. The Liberal party has a strong nineteenth-century tradition of provincial rights, and

with its general tendency to drift back into Victorianism on economic issues it will hardly resist the temptation to resurrect the old cries of Mowat and Laurier which did such good service in the past. The academic advisers of the party, however, were rather insistent at Port Hope in suggesting several constitutional changes which would increase Dominion powers, and they were quite ready to discuss the question of the amending process.

It is therefore worth recalling that at the Dominion-Provincial conference of 1927 Mr. Lapointe, the chief constitutional expert of the Liberal party, made certain definite proposals as to constitutional amendment which are the most concrete that have been put forward by any responsible political leader of any of the parties. He pointed out that the present necessity of going to the British Parliament for constitutional changes is not consistent with our national autonomy. And he put forward for discussion the proposition that future amendments to the B.N.A. Act should come into force after a joint resolution of the two Houses at Ottawa followed by the approval of a majority, i.e., five, of the provinces. Certain clauses of the Act, those which protect the cultural institutions of the French, were to be excepted from this process of amendment and were to be unchangeable except with the consent of all the provinces. These clauses were: Section 93, which contains the provisions about separate schools; Section 133 on language; and Section 92, subsections 12, 13 and 14, dealing respectively with the solemnization of marriage in the province, property and civil rights in the province, and the administration of justice in the province. In 1927 the provinces would not consider Mr. Lapointe's proposals or could not agree among themselves, and the matter was dropped. One would like to hear more discussion among constitutional lawyers about his reservations, especially that on property and civil rights. But in the meantime he has gone further than any other public man to make reasonable discussion of the amending process possible.

Since 1927 we have had the Statute of Westminster which explicitly states that nothing in its enactments shall affect the customary process of amending the B.N.A. Act. The customary process is that the House of Commons and Senate at Ottawa pass a joint resolution for a certain change and that the change is then enacted into law by the British Parliament at Westminster. That the consent of the provinces is necessary in addition to the resolution of the two Houses at Ottawa is a theory which runs counter to all the historical precedents. We have had amendments which were passed without even consulting the provinces, and in 1907 there was an amendment passed despite the opposition of the Province of British Columbia. But it is obviously politically desirable that the provinces should be consulted on such matters, and the present custom of frequent Dominion-Provincial conferences provides the machinery for such consultations.

Dominion and provinces are only two different ways of arranging ten million people. If we leave out of discussion the racial and religious minority rights which no sane man proposes to touch, the question whether for a particular activity we should be arranged as nine provinces or as one Dominion is largely a matter of expediency. Under the divi-

sion of powers of 1867 the provinces have been given an inelastic revenue system combined with responsibilities in the field of social services which require in the twentieth century constantly expanding expenditures. A good many of these social services—unemployment insurance is an obvious example—

are such as can best be administered by a single national authority. The breakdown of provincial finances in the West is going to force us, if nothing else will do it, to face seriously the question of amending our federal constitution.

F. H. U.

CANADA AND THIS NEXT WAR

A long view of Canadian foreign policy

By ESCOTT REID

'I appreciate the seriousness of the statement that I am about to make to this honourable House, but I am giving my considered, definite opinion when I say that I cannot conceive of any developments which would justify this country in sacrificing the blood of one single Canadian on the future battle-fields of Europe. Let us look ahead! We must! We generally get into trouble by not taking the long view. Let us act in such a way that we can honourably decline to participate when the hour arrives.' (General A. D. McRae, in the Canadian Senate on February 1st, 1934.)

A discussion of Canadian foreign policy today, if one takes a long view, must be concerned with much more than the question of Canadian participation in European wars. The conduct of Canadian external relations both economic and political constitutes Canadian foreign policy, and if a fundamental change in these relations is necessary the whole fabric of Canadian national economic life will have to be recast. If taking long views will keep Canada out of trouble, as Senator McRae suggests, long views should be taken, and if we are called theorists for our pains we can at least retort that we are no more theoretical than the organizer of the Conservative party in the last Federal election, and no more theoretical than most writers on international affairs, since with few exceptions the problem they are most concerned with today is what their respective countries should do in the event of failure to create on the ruins of the League structure an effective instrument for the maintenance of peace by international cooperation.

In the House of Commons on February 12th a debate took place on Canadian foreign policy in which Mr. Michael Luchkovich, Mr. J. S. Woodsworth, and Mr. R. B. Bennett spoke. The Prime Minister's position was that the aim of Canadian foreign policy was 'to uphold every effort that is made to promote peace, to advance the principle of peaceful settlement of difficulties in the world's court, and above all to secure, if it be within the wit and power of man, that disarmament which will cease to make the possession of arms an invitation to breach of the peace.' That is all very well, though it is indefinite and would be subscribed to by the statesmen of every nation, but it does not, and was not intended to, answer the question which is agitating many Canadians, namely, what is Canada to do if the collective system of security disappears, with the result that these aims prove unattainable for many years, and the world is faced with the imminent danger of wars in Europe and Asia. It is to be

hoped that when the estimates of the Department of External Affairs come up in the House of Commons later in the session, the members will take advantage of the promise of the Prime Minister that 'the most ample opportunity will be afforded to every member to discuss until he is weary of the discussion every phase of our foreign policy, and I shall endeavour to the extent of my ability to answer any questions that are suggested.'

By the time that debate occurs it may be possible to determine more accurately than at present whether the collective system has collapsed. The evidence of that collapse need not, of course, be the dissolution of the League, since the League may meet a fate worse than death and become the instrument of one of the groups of alliances into which the world seems to be dividing.

If the collective system disappears and a rump League and other alliances take its place, Canada will have to choose between adherence to one of these competing alliances, and isolation. In fact, Canada's choice will lie between continued membership in a new sort of centralized British Empire, which may or may not be a member of the rump League, and passive membership in the North American alliance.

There are many great advantages to Canada in choosing the first alternative if by so doing she is provided with a secure market for her goods, since increasing political insecurity in Europe and elsewhere will mean that her markets overseas will constantly diminish. As Mr. R. B. Bennett explained to the House of Commons on January 30th, the French, to take one example, fear that if war occurs they will either be starved out because of a submarine blockade or held up to ransom by countries like Canada. The fear of war thus acts as an immediate stimulus to measures for increasing national economic self-sufficiency and for decreasing Canadian exports. Even the diminished markets which will remain overseas after these measures are taken will be insecure since trade with belligerent countries three thousand miles away will be very difficult to carry on. If, therefore, Great Britain were to continue to buy Canadian exports in large quantities, Canada should be prepared to pay handsomely for it.

But the British market is only secure if the British Government think they can keep their lines of communication open with Canada in wartime. They found that task difficult in the last war. They will find it even more difficult in the next. They will

probably, therefore, like the other European countries, intensify their present efforts to make themselves as nearly self-sufficient in foodstuffs as is possible. They will also have to build up their defence services in order to protect their trade routes. Thus our markets in Great Britain will be diminishing ones in time of peace, insecure in the event of war, and dependent upon the maintenance of a strong British navy.

In so far, however, as Great Britain gives special treatment to Canadian goods by slowing down her drive for self-sufficiency and thereby imperilling her security, she will naturally expect that Canada in return will take part in any first-class war in which she is engaged.

Even disregarding this argument of the market, Canada must, if she continues in the Empire, be prepared to present a united front with the other members of the Empire if one member is involved in a first-class war. Should the British once more think they are fighting with their backs to the wall, Canada could not conceivably be neutral or passively belligerent and remain in the Empire. The bitterness that would arise between Canada and Great Britain would be too intense and the link between them would snap.

Continued membership in the Empire in the event of a breakdown of the collective system would, therefore, involve the assumption by Canada of a moral obligation to take part in serious British wars. How frequent and how serious are these wars likely to be? On the answer to that question depends in large measure the answer to a whole series of questions about the conduct of Canadian foreign policy. *The Round Table* in the leading article in its last issue came to this depressing conclusion: 'The English Channel is too narrow and the Commonwealth is too widely distributed all over the world for Great Britain to be able to keep for long out of any general conflagration.' Mr. Arthur Henderson in a recent article in *The Nineteenth Century* expresses his agreement with this conclusion. He is of the opinion that if either of the two rival alliances into which Europe would split after the failure of the collective system 'should show signs of getting the upper hand, we should as before 1914 drift into the opposite camp in order to redress the balance.'

National isolation seems decidedly more attractive than the prospect of losing another fifty thousand Canadians in a second great war or series of wars, even if by taking that risk Canada secure a fairly stable market in Great Britain for her wheat, bacon, apples, cheese, and lumber. National isolation would be even more desirable if Canada could both keep her fifty thousand Canadians at home and also sell her products abroad and so maintain the Canadian population at a reasonable standard of living, but that sort of paradise Canada can only attain in a world governed by law and not by force. The difficulty about national isolation for Canada in a world governed by force is that it involves an unambiguous announcement that Canada will send overseas to future wars, 'not a man, not a ship, not a gun.' Only by such an announcement can the Dominion in Senator McRae's phrase 'honourably decline to participate when the hour arrives.' That announcement once made it will be obvious that should Great Britain be involved in a general con-

flagration, Canada will have to leave the Empire. Great Britain will therefore not be inclined to sacrifice for Canada an ounce of the economic security which she might otherwise attain by increasing her efforts toward national economic self-sufficiency. She will, consequently, provide a diminishing market for Canadian goods.

The traditional Canadian policy of expediency in politics would be to take advantage of British markets in peace time but to retain a free hand in the event of war. Such a policy would be both dishonourable and futile. Unless a frank declaration of neutrality in future British wars is made Canada will be entangled in a mesh of moral obligations and if she does not immediately come to Great Britain's assistance when war breaks out she will have thrown in her face remarks similar to those made by the French Ambassador to Great Britain when he was informed by Sir Edward Grey on August 1, 1914, that France could not count on British assistance: '*Ils vont nous lâcher, ils vont nous lâcher,*' and later in the day when waiting for further news of the British government's position, '*J'attends de savoir si le mot honneur doit être rayé du vocabulaire anglais.*'

British High Commissioners in Canada will be too intelligent to make accusations like these in public, but interventionist Canadians will not hesitate to hurl them against non-interventionists and they may well constitute the decisive factor in persuading the Canadian government that if they enter the war they will have a majority of the Canadian people behind them. It is futile to hope that if Canada takes no action now she is at liberty to keep out of British wars in future. The issue has to be decided in peace time when the atmosphere is fairly cool and when there is still time for the United Kingdom and Canadian governments to mould their economic and political policies to accord with that announcement. For Canada it means a reversal of the policy of the Ottawa agreements since these have already, as Mr. T. W. L. MacDermot has put it, 'made it more difficult than before for the Dominions to stay out of an Imperial war with dignity.'

The loss of the English market will not matter much if Canada can find a market on the American continents to take its place. In fact it would be all the better because in an anarchic world where trade routes may be interfered with and markets disorganized by war, it is best to sell one's goods as near home as possible and to countries least likely to be involved in major hostilities. But the difficulty is that North and South America provide poor markets for the Dominion's agricultural surpluses. Last year agricultural and animal products made up one-half of Canada's exports and 57 per cent. of this half was taken by the United Kingdom. If Canada had to depend on present American markets most of the Western wheat farmers would have to give up business. Since, however, she possesses certain goods, especially wood products and non-ferrous metals, which the United States needs and cannot easily obtain elsewhere, Canada might be able to make a far-reaching reciprocity agreement with the United States after which the West would be treated as a devastated area from which many of the Western farmers would be transferred to other occupations and the resultant loss of national income spread

over the whole community by a general lowering of the standard of living. In this way Canada might lose her export markets for wheat and keep her fifty thousand Canadians at home.

They might not, however, remain Canadians. If they were killed in overseas wars there would be a number of corners of foreign fields which would be forever Canada. If they stay at home there may be no corner of any field in Canada which will not be forever the United States. For if in order to protect herself from being dragged into overseas wars, and from having her trade flow in channels which might be blocked by war, Canada were to embrace a policy of political isolation and economic rapprochement with the United States, she would become dependent on the United States for her only secure market and it would also be more obvious even than at present that she was also dependent upon the United States for the defence of her shores. This combination of economic and political dependence might well be too much for her nascent nationality, and she would in fact if not in name become

part of the United States.

Canada might also, of course, discover too late that by transferring from the British to the American orbit in world politics, she had jumped from the frying-pan of European wars into the fire of Pacific wars, and that she was morally obliged to send troops to help the United States fight Japan, though just where she would send them is difficult to imagine. Probably, however, even if she remains in the Empire she is already directly in the line of fire if war breaks out between Japan and the United States, and membership in the Empire will not keep her from being involved in that struggle.

Neither alternative facing Canada in the event of failure to construct an effective international organization seems especially entrancing, but there is no reason why it should be. Mr. Stanley Baldwin has said: 'Who does not know that one more war in the West and the civilization of the ages will fall with as great a crash as that of Rome.' When civilizations are crashing, the blasting of the hopes of a nation of ten million is no great matter.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN RURAL SASKATCHEWAN

By G. E. BRITNELL

DESPITE some misleading outward manifestations, standards of living in the West have probably never been—by any civilized measurement—very high.

The most persistent western myth is the farmer who used to go to California for the winter. One pictured a vast exodus to warmer climates immediately the last bushel of wheat was in the elevator. Since probably less than 1% of the farmers have ever been beyond the Rockies the Westerner is completely unable to account for the wide currency of the myth. The second charge of thriftlessness arose out of the automobiles which used to line both sides of the main street of every little prairie hamlet between Winnipeg and Peace River every Saturday night during the summer months. There is more tangible evidence in support of this charge and many individual instances of extravagance are undeniable. However, the most cursory examination would have revealed that the great majority of these cars were of the cheapest manufacture, while for the average farmer, they might be justly considered a necessity rather than a luxury in a country of great distances and short seasons where time is frequently at so great a premium.

The excellent telephone service provided under public ownership in all the prairie provinces by a net-work of long distance and rural connecting lines, while inevitably entailing a large investment in plant, can be defended on the same grounds as the automobile. In addition the rural telephone went far to relieve the sense of social isolation and to give a necessary contact with centres where medical aid might be available when needed.

I have never heard it suggested that the moral fibre of the Ontario farmer has been weakened through the comforts and conveniences by which he is surrounded, but some rather interesting comparisons are suggested by the agricultural statistics con-

tained in Final Bulletin No. XIX of the Seventh Census of Canada. When the Census was taken in the summer of 1931 a period of relative prosperity enjoyed by Western agriculture had just drawn to a close. The Census gives a total of 288,000 farms for the three prairie provinces and 192,000 for Ontario, and contains a brief record of farm facilities in all the provinces. Twenty minutes of applied mathematics reveals that 5,036 out of the 288,000 farms of the prairie provinces have water piped in the kitchen; or, reduced to more manageable proportions that only one out of every 57.2 farms in Western Canada enjoys this convenience, while in Ontario the corresponding ratio is one out of every 9.54. In the West one out of every 72.8 has water piped in the bathroom (it would be interesting to know how many have a bathroom of any kind) as compared with one out of 15.76 in Ontario. One out of every 34.44 Western farm homes is lighted by gas or electricity as compared with one out of 5.95 in Ontario. Even in the realm of automobiles and telephones, where I felt it necessary to file a special brief for the prairie provinces, Ontario has a comfortable margin; in proportion to farms Ontario has more than twice as many rural telephones and over 40% more rural automobiles. Of these automobiles 4 out of 5 in Ontario, 4 out of 76 in Western Canada, may travel on paved or gravelled highways, or, to put it in another way, 20% of Ontario farms and 94.7% of all Western farms are located on dirt roads.

The average farm home in Saskatchewan showed few signs of extravagance in the small cheaply-built frame house, the inexpensive but uncomfortably primitive heating system, the coal-oil and gasoline lamps, the cheap and inadequate furniture and the almost total lack of domestic conveniences. The clothing of the farmer and his family came from the local 'General Store' or the big mail order house and was chosen with a view to cheapness and util-

ity, while in many farm homes flour sacks went far to supply the need for bed linen. A large part of the food was raised on the farm giving a rude plenty of salt pork and eggs in summer and of frozen beef and potatoes in winter; fresh fruit was the greatest possible luxury while farm children seldom saw oranges from one Christmas to another. Over wide areas of the province medical facilities were inadequate; after the prairie trails had disappeared, the roads, when once the traveller left the few half-graded dirt highways, must have been among the worst in the world; the cultural life of the farm community tended to continue as barren as that characteristic of all agrarian frontiers.

Actually most of the wealth the Saskatchewan farmer produced, when it did not go to pay high interest rates, went to improve his efficiency—or so he was told by everyone. It went to buy more and, perhaps generally, better equipment and to increase the size of his farm unit.

So much for Saskatchewan standards of living in pre-depression years. What is the standard of living today? The farmers go no more to California. The Ford car has become a horse-drawn vehicle. The rural telephone system is breaking down with staggering losses in the number of subscribers every year. Farm products (where there have been crops) supply an ever larger part of the farm diet. Farm clothing constitutes a problem of the first magnitude; it has been estimated recently that it would take \$30,000,000 to restore the clothing of the rural population of Saskatchewan to pre-depression standards. The unrepaired houses aggravate a fuel problem which has always been acute on the prairie plains where no wood is available.

The framework of rural life as represented in its municipal institutions shows signs of disintegration. Official figures illustrate graphically the extent of the financial collapse. For instance, it is reported 'that 40 rural municipalities, 50 villages and 27 towns have defaulted in their debenture payments. In addition 828 rural school districts, 225 village school districts and 48 town school districts have defaulted in the payment of their debentures. . . . The bank indebtedness of rural municipalities at the end of 1932 was \$8,379,548.97; the amount due schools, etc., for the requisition of taxes amounted to \$8,120,615.71; the uncollected arrears of taxes plus the tax sale holdings (which must be added to get a correct statement of total arrears) amounted to \$30,368,345.82.

Thus the total arrears in rural areas at the end of 1932 were almost equal to two years' taxes on every acre of farm land in Saskatchewan—and this despite the wide adoption of coercive measures of tax-collection in that year.

Unfortunately no recent official figures on the position of rural telephone companies are available. From the end of 1930 to the end of 1931 defaults on debenture payments increased from \$113,234.63 to \$604,469.00 while by the end of 1932 it is understood that over five hundred rural companies were in default.

Apart from the problem of relief in afflicted areas the greatest struggle has been to keep the schools open. In this the people of Saskatchewan have been only partially successful. Although the permission of the Minister of Education is required when a

rural school is operated for less than 200 teaching days a year, less than 40% of rural schools were open for the full year in 1932 as compared with 72.12% in 1931 and 73.22% in 1930. A considerable number of rural schools close for some months during the winter because (a) the school district cannot afford to buy coal; (b) children have not sufficient warm clothes to go to school. The number of schools closed would, of course, be much greater if it were not for the activities of government and private agencies in supplying clothes, and the energy of the Department of Education and the Relief Commission—not to mention the substantial generosity of the mine-owners—in providing coal for school districts in need of such assistance.

The sacrifices demanded of the rural teacher require some mention inasmuch as official statistics showing the average salary contract at a little better than \$600 a year in 1932 do not tell the whole story. The provincial government grant to a single room rural school, after the reduction of one-third made effective January 1st, 1932, is \$1.00 per teaching day, and, while the actual number of teachers who receive little or no more than the government grant is unknown, reports would indicate that the number is by no means negligible. Even over the very large distressed area of the province, salaries, as distinct from actual payments, are commonly somewhat higher than this statement might suggest; but, since balances are paid in school district notes and since teachers affirm that there is generally no way of discounting these notes, even at 50%, their usefulness, at the present time, is definitely limited.

The plight of the doctor in many rural areas is little better, while the retailer and others who serve agrarian communities have suffered severely from the economic paralysis that has descended on the villages and towns.

Provincial institutions show the effects of the strain. The revenues of the provincial government shrank rapidly with the decline in wheat prices. Necessary social services have been greatly reduced or completely abolished. Despite this, Saskatchewan has been forced to call on the Dominion treasury for sums which last March amounted to well over \$28,000,000 made up as follows:

Loans covering province's share of public works, etc.	\$1,873,212
Loans covering New York Commitments	3,934,341
Loans for provincial purposes	6,653,740
Loans for Seed Grain	5,590,000
Provided for Saskatchewan Relief Commission	2,000,000
Provided as Dominion's share of Relief in dried-out areas	8,250,000
	<hr/> \$28,301,293

But this is not the end. At the beginning of September a delegation, headed by the attorney-general of the province, waited on the prime minister at Ottawa and pointed out that more than one-half the rural municipalities of Saskatchewan would need government assistance during the winter due to crop failure caused by drought and grasshoppers. Food for the distressed families, fodder for stock, and seed for next year would have to be provided in 140 municipalities, and 58 of these were absolutely bankrupt and unable to contribute any share

of the cost. A few days previously Premier Anderson had estimated the cost at \$10,000,000 for the coming year, as compared with advances for relief in rural areas of \$3,000,000 in the previous year, and \$16,500,00 in 1931.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the problems of relief and low prices. It is significant that a considerable section of the drought area this year is North and West of that which was so severely hit in 1930 and 1931, and has had at least average crops for several years. Normally the amount of relief required in such districts would be small, but four years of disastrous prices finds every reserve exhausted and consequently one even partial crop failure means complete destitution.

It would be quite incorrect to assume that governments have been left to bear the burden of relief unaided. The Saskatchewan Voluntary Rural Relief Committee alone had, according to a statement given to the press on December 1st, distributed 280 carloads of fruit and vegetables received from various parts of Canada, as well as 60 carloads of coal and large quantities of clothing and other necessities.

Many suggestions as to the course by which the successful rehabilitation of Saskatchewan agriculture might be effected have been offered, but, unfortunately, most of them have rather obvious limitations.

Debt adjustment two years ago looked like a promising solution. The so-called Debt Adjustment legislation passed by the Saskatchewan Legislature last March undoubtedly gave the farmer some 'security of tenure'. 'The Debt Adjustment Act, 1933' refuses the creditor the use of the machinery of the courts for the collection of debts unless the creditor first secures the permission of the provincial Debt Adjustment Board to bring the action. 'The Limitation of Civil Rights Act, 1933' is, in effect, a revision of the terms of existing contracts such as Mortgages and Agreements for Sale of Land. In recent speeches Premier Anderson has intimated that more drastic debt adjustment legislation might be expected at the coming session. The compulsory drastic scaling down of debts at the present time might have some psychological value but economically it would not affect the situation. Debts are not being paid and the bulk of them, in all probability, will never be paid. The fact remains that however real the debt burden might become with higher prices, the real problem facing the farmer today is how to carry on even when past indebtedness is completely ignored.

Reduction in costs of production is an attractive theory somewhat difficult to translate into reality. Lower the standard of living? But the existence of a margin above subsistence might well be disputed now, especially since there is an irreducible minimum of clothing and shelter in a climate like that of Saskatchewan. More mechanization? But this increases cash costs which are not met now, and even if the advantages could be proved the farmer could not get the money. Actually (though the advantages of the grain truck and the cheaper tractor in normal years are not in dispute here) after the not entirely satisfactory experience with the combined harvester-thresher and other types of expensive farm machinery, prudence might dictate something in the nature of a retreat from mechanization. Artificial fertilizers can scarcely be considered out of the experimental stage, and, if they were, are open

to the, at present fatal, objection that their use involves an increase in cash costs. Any gains from improved technique are likely to be more than offset by increasing costs from soil-drifting, soil-exhaustion, weed-infestation, plant diseases and insect pests—all heightened in many areas by abandoned farms and the inability of farmers to maintain ordinary standards of cultivation.

Diversification or mixed farming would not merit consideration if it were not for the wide vogue this ancient panacea apparently still enjoys outside Western Canada. Mixed farming is, of course, out of the question over a very wide area, as Dr. D. A. MacGibbon has very aptly pointed out:

'It is frequently forgotten that the development of drought-resistant types of wheat enables this cereal to grow and bring profitable yields under conditions of moisture that would make mixed farming impossible. This is a fact of the very greatest importance which is often not taken into consideration. Last summer (1931) in southern Saskatchewan there was a complete failure of crops over a large area, such as had not been experienced since the beginning of settlement, thirty-two years ago. There had been short crops; but a generation of farmers had prospered there and communities were well established. Last spring rains failed to come in time. Everything burned up for lack of water. Water could not be had even to maintain small garden plots, and the supplies necessary for household use and for keeping the working animals alive was being trucked or freighted for distances of at least twenty miles. To suggest to farmers of this area that the true solution for the calamity was to change methods of cultivation and to embark upon projects of mixed farming, betrays ignorance of the situation. Perhaps I might quote the statement of a master farmer within this area: "It is out of the question to try and grow clovers or cultivated grasses on the good prairie wheat soils because of the difficulty experienced in getting a catch in many years, as well as the disappointing yields that follow grass and sweet clover crops if there is a shortage of moisture".'

In view of recently completed soil studies an eventual return to a ranching economy may be indicated in some areas. The Department of Soils at the University of Saskatchewan reports that in the south-western quarter of the occupied area of the province 43.5% of the soil is sub-marginal, 21.6% is barely marginal, thus leaving only the remaining one-third really suitable for cultivation. By no means all of this section of the province is under cultivation at the present time. However where sub-marginal lands have been brought under cultivation a return to the range is not easy insofar that it is almost impossible to get the native prairie grass back on to such lands, and no satisfactory substitute for the native grass has yet been found, while the policy of depopulation involved brings its problems to harrassed governments. Thousands have left this area in the last three years for the promised lands of the North, but not all the newly-occupied northlands may justify the hopes of the weary migrants.

After taking account of all marginal lands the fact remains that a very large part of Saskatchewan is technically better suited to the production of wheat—and wheat of the highest quality—than to the production of any other commodity.

BEHIND THE FRENCH CRISIS

FEBRUARY 6th, 1934, the day the embattled Paris bourgeoisie were with difficulty prevented from treating the Chamber of Deputies as their ancestors 145 years ago treated the Bastille, may or may not go down to posterity as a turning point in French political history. Already at the time of writing the discipline and effectiveness of the general strike of February 12th have shown the existence of a strong neutralizing element. Moreover, the events of the past few years have taught even amateur political philosophers to keep a tight rein on their prophetic impulses. In the present instance it would be particularly foolhardy to base forecasts on the incoherent and self-contradictory accounts of bewildered foreign newspaper correspondents. The history and the implications of the Little Revolution will not be written or comprehended for weeks to come.

So, although the present writer, who has always accepted the French estimate of their own capacity for logic, would like nothing better than to ask himself a number of startled rhetorical questions, such as 'Why insist on attacking the Chamber by crossing the Pont de la Concorde when it is so much easier to go round the back way?' 'Why show disapproval of parliamentary corruption by smashing statues of mermaids in the Tuileries and burning flower-stalls on the Champs Elysees?' 'Why shout "Vive Chiappe" on any occasion whatsoever?'—he will refrain.

More important than the *mardi sanglant* are the events that have led up to it. Economic, political and psychological factors are mixed up in a fine tangle.

'Your Republic is a cesspool of graft,' shriek the editorial writers of the royalist *Action Française*, conveniently forgetting as they shriek the endless and unsavory procession of financial scandals which bespatter the history of the *ancien régime*. It is doubtful whether Frenchmen in public life have been particularly corrupt lately, whether in comparison with their own standards or with those of other nations. But they have been very careless. They have allowed their names to be linked far too freely with those of the real crooks who are to be found in the vicinity of the Place de la Bourse rather than on the benches of the Palais Bourbon. In the last five or six years the frequency of front-page revelations has been allowed to exceed what one might cynically term the roughly permissible average. The *affaire Hanau*, the *affaire Oustric*, the *Snia Viscosa*, the *Aéropostale*, and a dozen other unsavoury messes have come packed a little too closely together in the series that leads up to the *affaire Stavisky*. And each successive crash has been more than just an ugly smear across the pages of the newspapers; it has meant loss or ruin to group after group of *rentiers*.

Are fundamental economic weaknesses perhaps more directly at the root of the matter? It is a matter of common knowledge that the French middle classes have been particularly hard hit by shrinking foreign trade and a crushing burden of taxation. That is true and it is permissible to weep a tear or so over the hard fate of the French bourgeois provided one remembers that much of his financial unpleasantness has, according to the universal custom, been

handed on to the working classes in the form of wage-cuts, staggered hours, and increasingly severe rationalization of every kind. Even so he remains in an unenviable position, but the crux of the economic factor lies not so much in the intolerableness of the Depression in so far as it affects the French bourgeois, but in the very fact that it touches him at all. He resents it, and not possessing the doubtful virtue of patience proceeds to do something about it. The French workers afford an example of the same mood under similar circumstances. When last year unemployment figures reached a peak of just under a quarter of a million—a ludicrously low maximum when set off against the record highs of Great Britain, Germany or the United States—there were riots and protest marches all over the country. The French proletarian temper—actually the French temper *tout court*—does not take kindly to drawing a starvation dole, working for nothing in militarized labour camps, or just sitting about waiting for prosperity to come round the corner.

It is doubtful whether the international situation was at all a real factor in the tumult of last month. At this point at least the Chamber and public opinion unite to form a solid front. Thoroughgoing realists are always more inclined to worry over present evils rather than future ones, and few Frenchmen seem to think that a remilitarized Germany will be much of a menace until ten years hence. But the internal political situation is quite a different pair of sleeves.

At alternate elections—that is to say on two occasions since the War—French voters have returned a Chamber with a strong leftist bias. And twice—in 1926 and again last month—a semi-revolutionary situation has immediately preceded the collapse of the cartel of left and left-centre parties. Is one to conclude from this that on either occasion there has been a swing of public opinion to the right? Not necessarily. The situation seems rather to have arisen from the fundamental dilemma in which left bourgeois majorities in the Chamber are almost bound to find themselves. Lacking a sufficient majority to form a government by themselves, they must seek assistance in one of two directions. If they look for help on the right it means dickering with the very conservative and nationalist elements they were originally elected to oppose, election pledges snap like dry twigs in every direction, and they end by antagonizing their own supporters. If they turn to the left they come bang up against the strong uncompromising phalanx of the French Socialist Party. Temporary Socialist aid can be bought at a price, but Leon Blum drives a hard bargain. He and his stalwarts have taken to heart the fateful example of the British Labour Party and the German Social-Democrats, and they seem to have no intention of exposing themselves to the corrupting contacts and dilution of doctrine which coalition with bourgeois parties inevitably entail. They would not share responsibility of government and their support was apt to be withdrawn at any moment. Quite naturally the middle-class French voter regards the Socialists as a revolutionary party and an alliance with them is as displeasing as an alliance with the right. This quandary is likely to become more acute rather than less with the gradual disso-

lution of the powerful Radical-Socialist party, a party which has, of course, never been Socialist and which few would call radical, but which has for years been numerically and organizationally the strongest in the Chamber, a veritable forcing-house for most of the leading politicians of the last half-century and the chief bulwark of the bourgeois republic. There are signs that the French middle classes are getting a little tired of the Radical-Socialists, and future elections may well show the familiar shift of votes away from the centre and towards the extremes which has acted as a storm-signal in other European countries.

It is natural to wonder whether the recent demonstrations are fascist in essence. The active leadership of Royalists, Jeunesses Patriotes, Francistes and what not, makes the question pertinent, but the very multiplicity of elements seem to show that Fascism in France is still in its early stages of development. What do these elements amount to at the present time? A great deal of fuss has been made over the Royalists, possibly because they sound picturesque and make good copy for foreign newspapermen. The present writer regrets that he has never been able to take them very seriously. Their chief organ, the *Action Française* is frequently described as being brilliantly written; it would be more correct to say that it is vigorously written. Its articles attract to the 'cause' a curious variety of types: blue-blooded driftwood from the Faubourg Saint-Germain which adheres for traditional and sentimental reasons, university students of the anything-for-action generation, a nucleus of army officers and a certain number of intellectuals enamoured of the nationalist mystic. During the eighteen-eighties many people used to say: '*Que la République était belle sous l'Empire.*' Today Utopians of the right are heard to murmur: '*Que la Monarchie est belle sous la République.*' French capitalism is looking for something more practical than a reincarnation of St. Louis or even of Louis XIV, and it is unlikely that the sad-eyed gentleman who calls himself the duc de Guise will be offered the job.

The Jeunesses Patriotes are hardly more formidable. Though they enjoy a measure of ecclesiastical support, which the Royalists forfeited after their excommunication, they lack efficient leadership. Their chief, Tattinger, left on a joy-ride to Egypt a few weeks before the recent troubles. It is hard to think of a Mussolini or a Hitler turning tripper with a crisis in the offing, and to Frenchmen such a leader is not *sérieux*. As for the Francistes, they are as yet an untried element in the international confraternity of shirt-wearers.

More symptomatic of French Fascism in its early stages is the presence of a steady doctrinal drift away from liberalism and democratic methods. The so-called *presse d'information*, big Paris dailies like *Le Journal*, *Le Matin*, *Le Temps*, and, of course, right-wing papers like *Le Figaro* and *L'Echo de Paris*, have recently concentrated in an attack on nineteenth-century parliamentarianism. They have gone further, and though they are the very first to protest in shocked horror at the spectacle of striking workers or conscientious objectors refusing to perform their military service, they have openly encouraged tax-strikes, notably last summer at Bray-

sur-Somme, where hundreds of small landowning farmers were egged on to show extra-legal resistance to the government. It would be going too far to say that the French bourgeois press is yet consciously fascist, but it is undoubtedly feeling its way in that direction. A number of individual Frenchmen in public life, who are in the habit of keeping one eye on the weather vane, are not slow to profit by this new orientation. It is impossible to read André Tardieu's long series of articles on government which have appeared during the past year in *L'illustration*, and at the same time to watch his antics in public, without realizing that he nurses pretty definite ambitions. Unfortunately for himself he can hardly pose as a St. George attacking the Dragon of parliamentary corruption; his own name has been associated with too many unsavoury messes in the past. Chiappe is another would-be dictator. He has for some time had great difficulty in keeping the fingers of his right hand from straying in between the second and third buttons of his waistcoat; this little policeman was not born in Ajaccio for nothing. Ever since his appointment to the Paris Prefecture of Police he has been flirting with fascist elements, and even the most uninstructed onlooker cannot help noticing that Chiappe's men keep their kid-gloves for the Royalists and the Jeunesses Patriotes, their batons, their boots, and their revolvers for Pacifists, Socialists, or Communists. M. Daladier deserves a vote of thanks from Liberals everywhere for removing this dangerous individual from such a key position.

But if the fascist wave is gaining momentum in France, so is the militant opposition to these grave-diggers of civilization. Anti-fascist forces in France extend far beyond the limits of the official proletariat well up into the ranks of the middle classes. The great mass of French civil servants form a solid block with the workers. Even the 80,000 members of the School-teachers' Union—and this sounds grotesque in Canada—are prepared to resist capitalist dictatorship with something more than words. It is impossible to say how greatly this resistance has been heartened and strengthened by the success of the 24-hour general strike called on the Monday following the demonstrations against the Chamber. For years French labour in general and the Confederation General du Travail in particular has been obsessed by the fiasco of the general strike called in 1919. Since then they have seen the British general strike of 1926 fritter away to nothing through childish irresolute leadership, and the general strike that might have saved Germany from Fascism in the summer of 1932 fail to materialize at all. Now this essential weapon has been restored untrusted to their hands.

There is one other factor which should not be left out if a really complete background for the events of February 6th is to be constructed. This factor is at once psychological and historical. Very modern experts in the science of politics would probably pooh-pooh it, but it can hardly be omitted altogether. It is a truism to say that all classes in France share a revolutionary tradition. The French middle classes have their own which goes far back beyond 1789. Long before then the burghers of Paris had formed the habit of mass protest in the streets.

Indeed with the removal of a few anachronisms the Cardinal de Retz' description of the *Journée des Barricades* at the height of the Fronde might serve as an account of the events of a few weeks ago. The French middle classes built the Republic. They rebuilt it in 1830 and ever since, but notably in 1832, in the summer of 1848 and in the spring of 1871, they have been busy defending their Revolution, the Revolution of yesterday, from the Revolution of tomorrow. On only two occasions in the past century have they lacked self-confidence and flown to one or other of the two Napoleons for the desperate remedies of dictatorship.

This may sound like a revolutionary tradition in reverse gear. It is. But in matters of revolutionary technique and habit it makes little difference. No militant from the *ceinture rouge* of Paris can teach a French student, a French shopkeeper, or even a French lawyer or a French doctor anything about the gentle art of building barricades, dodging truncheons and bullets, or any other of the fine points of street protest tactics. The machinery of mass action is there and it has not fallen into disrepair as it has across the Channel, where a century of easy living has robbed the English of their ancient and admirable birthright of truculence.

I remember once in Portugal shortly after a seasonal 'revolution' seeing a snapshot in a Lisbon shop window of a stout citizen with a bowler hat and a rifle advancing along a bullet-swept street. It looked grotesque at first, but one realized after the first smirk that here was a citizen who knew that he had duties as well as rights. Bowler hat and cloth cap both cling to this tradition in France; it cuts clear across class lines. In August, 1789, something was wrong with France and the people of Paris marched to Versailles to interview the sovereign. It would have gone hard then with any police if they had tried to bar the road. In 1934 the sovereign lives in the Palais Bourbon, he has three hundred heads and he talks too much.

FELIX WALTER

LAMENTATIONS

The sower weeps no more the
Salty tears, that
Wash the soul, and
Wet the clod, in hope of
Better things;
A doomed man, upon a
Damned soil, his eyes
Are dry.
O God, have mercy on a land, whose
Sowers have forgotten how
To cry.

The harvesters rejoice no more, in
Gathered sheaves and
Garnered fruits of
Toil, in heaps of
Hopelessness.
Earth's bounty is a curse, and
Reapings are but

Heavy chaff.

O Lord of harvests great, forsake
Us not, when harvesters no longer
Laugh.

The workman is no longer
Free, to hew both wood and
Rock, and bend the
Brass and iron to
His will.
The serf of wheel, and cog, and
Crane, that din upon
The ear;
O God, remember us when pride of
Artisan has turned to
Shackled fear.

The money changers lust, on
Mart and market place, has
Made them mad upon their
Gods of gold
And gain.
The gold grows, oh, how dim, and
All their gain is turned
To loss.
Lest we forget O God, let us
Remember still that pelf and power
Are dross.

The patriot has sold his
Right of birth, to
Fill an empty
Paunch with flesh, and
Idle hours
With mirth.
The violent and cunning
Man, doth prosper in
His stead;
Abide with us O Lord, when
Freeborn man has bartered liberty
For Bread.

The singer's soul is warped, and
Lyre and chisel,
Pen and brush, are
Prostitutes of idiocy
And shame.
Raw blare and naked glare, a
Broken hearted Muse
Doth mumm;
O Lord, deliver us when poet
Souls are deaf and blind, and worse
Than dumb.

The prophets preach smooth
Words, to itching ears, and
Wink at sin, while feet unholy
Tread the blood
Of God.
Handfuls of barley and
Stale bread their wage, while
Sinners sigh;
Rouse from their dens, O Christ, the
Prophets who are not afraid to
Prophecy.

O. W. LINNEMEIER.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE—AN OUTLINE

By LEO MALANIA

SO many illiterate notions still cling to the concept of the class struggle, and to the theory of historical materialism, that a short summary of these ideas may be of some use in clearing away some of the more glaring misconceptions which now distort their meaning. To many people, the words 'class struggle' still stand for something essentially 'bad', just as the expression 'historical materialism', the name of that method of historical research whose core is the hypothesis of the class struggle, seems to suggest something vulgar, something that implies a denial of any motive of idealism or altruism to human beings. But if words are to mean anything more than their sounds, it is essential to make an attempt to understand intelligently the ideas they represent.

The fundamental problem in all history is that of social, political and cultural change. The question we all must face is: why is it that society is in a state of permanent instability? Why does one form of social organization eventually give way to another? Why is it, for example, that during the last five hundred years the Western world has passed through feudal, commercial, and industrial forms of economic organization, while their political counterparts have varied from absolute autocracy to post-democratic dictatorship? The method of historical materialism attempts a solution of this problem, by an analysis of the fundamental forces underlying and motivating these changes.

We must remember that Karl Marx, the author of this method, was a revolutionary before he was a theorist. Consequently, a scientific solution of the problem of social change became for him, a matter of practical necessity. If we roughly define science as simply an explanation of how a thing works, then the Marxian approach is the only one that can be called scientific in any real sense of the word. Of course, it has been claimed that because Marx was himself a revolutionary and approached history from that point of view, his conclusions must therefore be distorted. Those who talk of scientific history, and believe that the historian can stand aside and survey all history as from a mountain-top are labouring under a pleasant but fatal illusion. They overlook an essential consideration in all science, namely that the position of the observer to the thing observed—the locus of observation—is itself an integral element of the total picture. What is observed depends, therefore, quite as much upon the observer as upon the phenomena he observes. And Marx, looking at history from the point of view of a social revolutionary, seeking to find out why a revolution succeeds at one time and in one place, and fails in another, was in a position to detect the underlying causes of social change far more readily than the historian who confines himself to a description of events, and who fails to grasp the significance of the real forces which are mainly responsible for those very events. What then, are these forces?

We may begin by examining the structure of society, and then consider what factors within it

produce social change. All social activities arise from the satisfaction of human wants and desires, whatever their nature may be. We can think of man only as a social animal and of his desires, only as they express themselves within a definite social context. Hence, production is in the last analysis, the most important activity of society, since it is the fundamental condition of its continued existence. The productive activities of society give rise to social groups, based upon a division of labour; thus, there appear groups of farmers, artisans, merchants, etc. The existence of these 'relations of production', whose sum total is the economic structure of society, is essential to the continuity of the historical process.

It is easy to see that any given set of productive relations exists independently of the particular individuals who participate in them, for while it is true that under certain conditions an individual member of an economic class may change his own economic status, and rise from the position, say, of farmer or labourer to that of a merchant or manufacturer, yet his class as a whole, as a collective unit in the process of production, cannot change its status. Or in other words, all labourers cannot become merchants without altering completely the whole set of relations based upon that productive process—without transforming completely the existing social structure.

That which gives rise to class antagonisms is the problem of the distribution of the social product. The question at issue is how much each group is to receive for its share in the process of production. Under a system of private ownership of the means of production (which must be clearly distinguished from the private ownership of the particular articles of consumption), one group is placed in a position of advantage in relation to another group, and is therefore able to obtain a greater proportion of the fruits of labour. The private ownership of the means of production, or in other words, the concentration in the hands of one economic class of the tools in the widest sense of the word, thus makes possible the exploitation of one group by the other. The particular form this exploitation may take has varied from the slavery of the Ancient World, and the Feudalism of the Middle Ages to that of capitalist exploitation. But in every case the root of the class conflict lay in the unsolved problem of distribution.

It is obvious from all this, that the class which finds itself in an advantageous position in the social structure, will attempt by every means possible to retain control of its position. It therefore undertakes the task of inculcating all the members of society with its own concepts of social organization. The existing arrangement is represented as an expression of the Will of God or as the Height of Reason. A whole system of religious, ethical, and philosophic sanctions is built up, and becomes the official philosophy of the dominant class. Thus, Aristotle justifies slavery, Hobbes absolutism, Locke property, and Hegel the Prussian State. The Church, the press, the movies, and the schools are enlisted for

this purpose, and since they are all controlled by the class in power, they become effective means of propaganda. Hence Marx's statement that 'in every epoch the ruling ideas have been the ideas of the ruling class.

And in order that these philosophic arguments might be all the more effective, a regular system of coercion is set up. The primary function of the State is the maintenance of 'peace, order and good government', that is, the preservation of the existing system of property relations, or in other words, the maintenance of the existing forms of economic exploitation. Private property itself depends upon the existence of the State, since the legal right to hold property is nothing but its guarantee that it will prevent others from using it. One aspect of the history of the State is the improvement and perfection of its methods of physical and moral coercion, the latest of which is that of hysterical nationalism. The growth of Fascism all over the world, as well as the tendency of traditional political parties to merge their differences in National governments, is an unmistakable index of the pressure put upon the State by the class antagonisms in modern society; while the appeal to 'common ideals' is a pathetic attempt to conceal the complete absence of any ideals common to fundamentally opposed classes.

On the other hand, the group that stands to gain from a change in the existing relations of production develops its own social philosophy. It sets out to criticize the existing social structure, and finds the most obvious point of attack in the laws of property, since they are the legal expression of the existing relations of production. A whole philosophy develops out of this criticism, enunciating principles which are opposed to those of the ruling class, as for example the philosophy of Roman Law during the Renaissance. Men fight and are ready to die for these principles, so that looking at the process of history from a distance, it appears as a struggle over principles and ideals; thus, Individualism stands opposed to the traditionalism of Medieval institutions, Freedom proclaimed in the glorious tone of a Milton challenges the Monarchy by Divine Right, and the principles of Democracy battle against the last strongholds of Privilege. But if we ask whence all these ideas have come, we find that they were conceived not *in vacuo*, but were developed in the minds of men who, consciously or unconsciously, felt the conflict between *changing* forces of production on the one hand, and *fixed* property relations on the other, relations which were tangibly perceived in the form of moral, religious, and political principles. The ruling class soon comes to realize that any criticism of these principles is an attack on the established institutions which ensure its domination, as the famous expression of James I 'No Bishop—No King!' shows to perfection.

Often it is through the struggle of principles that men first become aware of their interests, but it must not be assumed therefore, that these principles are merely a clever mask put on by a greedy and rapacious class in order to fool its opponents. This is confusing historical materialism with ethical materialism, which identifies all motives no matter how disinterested they may appear, with pure self interest. I know of no more bitter denunciation of this flippant cynicism, which recognizes nothing as in-

trinsically sincere and genuine, than Karl Marx's attack on Bentham for his reduction of all human motives to a system of petty accounting. Ideas are real for those who believe in them, and the motives which move a Martin Luther or a Cromwell to stake everything on their convictions, cannot be reduced to a mere desire for personal gain. Altruism is an undeniable fact of human behaviour. But the important question remains: *why do certain ideals and principles finally prevail over others?* The idealist attempts to answer it by such nebulous and uncritical concepts as the 'progress of the human mind', 'relentless logic of events', 'Destiny', etc. It is this idealistic vagueness that historical materialism destroys by tracing ideas to their social sources, and by showing that the triumph of an ideal is, in the last analysis, the triumph of the class that has elaborated it, consciously or unconsciously, in the course of its struggle for economic and political mastery.

Thus, in England, the constitutional struggle waged by Hampden and his friends in the 1640's was the outcome of the growing disproportion between the real strength of the English Middle Class and the amount of political influence it possessed, a disproportion which found expression in the constitutional demands of the propertied classes to control the State and its policy. The victory of the Middle Class in the Revolution of 1688, was perceived as the victory of Whig principles, whose statement in the form of universal truths obscured their class origin. Indeed, to the men of the time the institutions and principles against which they struggled—the established church, the royal prerogative, guild and private monopolies—did not appear as merely aspects of the social setting within which the process of history had placed them, but rather as impediments, from which the progress of human intelligence was destined to free them. Such, too, was the buoyant creed of the French Revolution, but the ruthless despotism of a Napoleon was needed to translate these newly-won principles into social and economic facts.

* * *

It has been objected that a division of society into economic classes overlooks the more important divisions along religious, national, political, and racial lines, which seem to have had a more profound effect on history. Moreover, it might be urged that even more important than oppositions between classes are the oppositions which exist within a given economic class, and that these have more far-reaching effects.

It is, of course, obvious that besides economic classes there are other social groups, and that the struggles between them occupy the bulk of our histories. But the important thing that is generally overlooked is that these social groups do not become revolutionary, make no attempt to transform the whole set of fundamental struggles of opposing economic classes. Consider, for example, the case of the Anabaptists, who took the teaching of Christ too seriously and attempted a social revolution in Münster. At once all the other religious sects, which had been furiously denouncing each other, found themselves united against the threat to their particular class, and the Anabaptists were cruelly suppressed.

What makes the class struggle in the last analysis decisive in history, is the fact that the opposition of one class to another cannot be resolved, except by a radical transformation of the whole social structure. The struggle between religious groups has been almost completely ended by toleration; national and racial oppositions can be resolved by some sort of federal arrangement, as in Canada, or by complete cultural autonomy, as in Russia; competition between groups of capitalists can be resolved, and in fact, is now being resolved by mergers, combines, and amalgamations. But the conflict between economic classes is inherent in the very structure of society, and the triumph of one class involves in the long run, a fundamental reshaping of all social relationships.

It has been objected that this interpretation of history ignores the effect of individuals on history, and that Marx's preoccupation with the social structure has made him forget the men who live in it. It is this aspect of historical materialism, the relation between the individual and his environment, that is most widely misunderstood. Even orthodox Marxists are only too prone to forget that the distinctive feature of the Marxian method, the core, one might say, of historical materialism, is its emphasis upon the decisive importance of human activity. It conceives historical development as a process of continuous reciprocal interaction between a given social environment on one hand, and the conscious activity of human beings on the other. It insists that it is quite as impossible to conceive a society without individuals, as it is to conceive individuals existing outside of some social organization, and that human activity and social organization are component parts of an integral historical process. The development of one involves a development in the other. A change in the balance of social forces produced, say by an improvement in the technique of production, gives rise to certain human desires and purposes, which seek to satisfy themselves by actions designed to change, to arrest or to extend still further the movement already begun. It is the clash of all these conflicting motives and tendencies that makes up the variegated pattern of history; but the underlying economic antagonisms are decisive, in so far as they determine the relations of productive classes whose opposing interests remain irreconcilable until the whole social structure is transformed.

Thus, it will be readily seen that nothing is further away from the Marxian conception of human activity than the mechanical materialism, which regards men's sensations and thoughts as the purely passive and automatic result of the environment upon the human animal. For Marx held that sensations were not mere carbon copies of the external world, but 'forms of practical, sensory, activity'.

In his criticism of Feuerbach, Marx wrote: 'The materialistic doctrine that men are the products of conditions and education, different men, therefore, products of other conditions and changed education, forgets that circumstances may be altered, and that the educator has himself to be educated.' Thought, then, is a practical activity, a guide to action that can transform objective circumstances, but whose scope is limited by the specific factors of a given situation. That is what Engel means when he writes:

'Men make their own history but in a given conditioning milieu upon the basis of actual relations already extant, among which the economic relations, no matter how much they are influenced by relations of a political and ideological order, are ultimately decisive, constituting a red thread which runs through all the other relations and enabling us to understand them.'

It is impossible, of course, to do justice to the theory of historical materialism within the narrow limits of this article. Enough, however, has been said to show that historical materialism is not a 'system' or a final explanation of all history, but a method of historical research. Nor is the 'economic factor' represented as a final cause, an ultimate reality of social life. Historical materialism is not medieval theology: it is a scientific hypothesis, whose ultimate correctness depends upon the test of practical experience. For the historian it is a clue to the solution of the problem of change in history. For the practical communist a guide to revolutionary action. More than this, it was never meant to be.

It might be well to conclude with this excerpt from Engels: 'According to the materialistic conception of history, the production and reproduction of real life constitutes in the *last instance* the determining factor of history. Neither Marx nor I ever maintained more. Now when someone comes along and distorts this to mean that the economic factor is the *sole* determining factor he is converting the former proposition into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various factors of the superstructure—the political forms of the class struggles and their results—constitutions, etc., established by victorious classes after hard-won battles—legal forms, and even the reflexes of all these real struggles in the brain of the participants, political, jural, philosophical theories, religious conceptions which have been developed into systematic dogmas, all these exercise an influence upon the course of historical struggles, and in many cases determine for the most part their form. There is a reciprocity between all these factors in which, finally, through the endless array of contingencies . . . the economic movement asserts itself as necessary. Were this not the case, the application of the theory to any given historical period would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree.'

FISHING VILLAGE

An echoed motor raps, unseen,
Behind the lighthouse rock;
The grass is coming, tall and green,
Around a shipyard block.

Black, rolling sheep are calling near
A jutting silhouette
Of graying sheds along a pier,
Among festoons of net.

Still headstones mount a seaward knoll:
Beyond, the curling waves,
Above the distant harbor shoal
That helped to make the graves!

ALAN B. CREIGHTON.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE AND THE MONARCHY

By J. H. AITCHISON

AT the moment of writing the storm provoked by Sir Stafford Cripps' reference to Buckingham Palace is about over. The newspapers have all had their say, young conservative units have made merry at Sir Stafford's expense. Lord Snowden has called his statement 'stupid and ignorant', and Uncle Jimmy Thomas, glad of the opportunity to do the ragging for a change, has laboured hard to prove that he can give as well as take. Earlier in the week placards referring to the affair shared the prominent places on the London sidewalks with those on the Stavinsky scandal, van der Lubbe's death, and the Loch Ness Monster. But now the sole surviving one, and probably the last that will appear, is that of the *Saturday Review* with its all too revealing question, 'His Majesty the King or Sir Stafford Cripps?'

It may be thought by some that the episode has no significance except as another example of the great pothole the modern political press can raise over nothing, or of the way in which an utterance of about three seconds' duration can cause a public man an untold amount of discomfiture. Actually, however, it has thrown into relief several important facts in the present political situation. For one thing, this is the first time that the Socialist League has been explicitly charged, as the *Manchester Guardian* charges it in its leader of January 8th, with being a white elephant to the Labour Party. That the Labour Party is in a position to afford a white elephant shows in itself that there has been a remarkable change in its outlook since 1931. To be impeded in its progress toward a goal implies the existence of a goal and an attempt to progress toward it. After the debacle of 1931 the Labour Party simply floundered. It had no white elephants because it did not know where it was going.

Of course a lot of pious resolutions were made about marking out a truly socialist programme and refusing to take office except as a majority government with the will to put that programme into force. But it is significant that the very group that addressed itself seriously to the task of marking out the implications of the attempt to establish socialism is now deemed to be an obstacle to party success. The fact of the matter is that the by-elections of last fall have been marked by a return to the *status quo* of 1929 in more than mere election totals. They have brought back to the Labour leaders the faint hope that, after all, the old lines of attack are not yet entirely useless. Moreover, the government has presented these leaders with some quite handsome election issues. As the East Fulham by-election and the stiffening antagonism to Sir John Simon have shown, the country is quite apprehensive about the Government's failure in disarmament. The Means Test will probably be one of the fighting issues of the next general election.

It may be thought that the experience of 1931 would have taught the Labour Party leaders that there are limits to the concessions that can be forced out of a capitalist order and still leave that order essentially intact. Human beings, however, are essentially optimistic and the 'practical politicians'

of the Labour Party are no exceptions. When I ventured to suggest to a member of the last Labour Cabinet that the limits of the concessions that British capitalism can afford had been about reached, I received a direct denial. Strangely enough, it is the recovery that has set in under the 'National' Government that provides the most substantial grounds for the revival of the faith in the breasts of the old guard. The next Labour Government will probably be able to find, at the very least, the twenty or thirty millions that the abolition of the Means Test would cost.

But whether or not the Labour Party could produce any significant increases in the working-class standard of living, it is doubtful whether it will be given the opportunity in the near future to try. Although in the recent by-elections the relative voting strength of the parties (with the exception of the Labour gains) is almost exactly that of 1929, it by no means follows that the same results would occur in a general election. In the case of a general election it would not be sufficient to exploit the dissatisfaction with the disarmament mess and the manifest absurdities of the 'National' regime. A comprehensive programme that could be presented as a clear alternative to the 'National' programme must be marked out and so far there are few signs that this has been done. The Labour Party in Britain is not yet out of the woods.

However much injury Sir Stafford Cripps has done to the Labour Party he has probably done much more to the Socialist League. Up to now the latter has received much of its driving force from the refreshing honesty with which it has faced its problems and the frankness with which it has explained them. One could forgive Sir Stafford's original statement about expecting opposition from Buckingham Palace. After all it embodies what nearly all socialist leaders think. G. D. H. Cole, in a reply to a question after his Fabian lecture of last October, stated definitely that his ideal was a republic. And it is amusing to reflect that just about a year ago Professor Laski devoted sixteen pages of his *Democracy in Crisis* to explaining in what sense the expectation of Royal opposition was a reasonable one, and that he suffered no torrent of denunciation as a result. If Cripps had attempted to render intelligible to the whole of the newspaper reading public the argument in support of his position he might not have succeeded, but at least the attempt would have left a better impression than has his ignominious retreat.

That argument is simply to the effect that the King, being human, no more escapes the operation of an 'inarticulate major premiss' than the rest of us. As such it is not a personal attack on the King but a dispassionate and legitimate generalization from the facts of human nature as we know them. If any one thinks that those on the Left are the only ones that believe that this 'inarticulate major premiss' might possibly cause another of the conventions of the constitution to be broken, the report of the *Times* of October 8th, 1932, on the Conference of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist



POINT ST. PETER—GASPE

By YVONNE MCKAGUE

Associations (the reference is given in *Democracy in Crisis*), will soon convince him of his error. The *Times* is reporting the contribution of Lord Rankeillor to the debate on the reform of the House of Lords—'If the safeguard of the House of Lords disappeared there would be only one safeguard left, which was to invoke the dormant veto of the Crown. That was the last thing Conservatives wished to do, but things might come to such a pass that it would be the only and necessary thing to be done to save the country from ruin.' But on this earlier occasion

the *Times* did not run an editorial ridiculing the speaker for his foolishness in suggesting the possibility of such a contingency.

Meanwhile the Conservatives look on and laugh. Well they might! They have created a new bogey. The next time they want to stampede the country into giving them a five years' lease on life a financial panic or a Zinovieff letter will not be necessary. A letter from G. D. H. Cole to George Lansbury will probably do the trick.

LAW-BREAKERS' COMMUNE

By MARION NELSON

ON the outskirts of Moscow there is what is perhaps the world's most amazing penitentiary, an experimental house of correction for offenders who have proved too intractable for the ordinary prisons. Here live 1,500 persons, 66 of them women, whose crimes range from theft to murder. When they come here their original sentences are obliterated; they stay a maximum of three years, after which they are free to go wherever they wish, or to stay in the commune if they have no desire to leave the work which has interested them. Former prisoners frequently receive official positions in the commune, becoming directors of factories or dormitory-supervisors.

The first step in this corrective system is to show the prisoner that he is not behind prison bars. Part of the commune is within the rather picturesque walls of an old monastery, but outside these walls are many buildings, so that the general effect is that of a village. Here are a club and a large general store, the windows of the latter full in untidy Russian fashion—for window-dressing is not yet an art for which the Soviets have had time (so easy is it to sell goods when the purchasing power of a commodity exceeds the amount of wares yet available)—of caps, leather goods, farm implements and books. It is punishment enough, according to the Russian government, to deprive a man of his liberty, without sadistic regulations calculated to break his spirit. Here, it is true, man is not entirely free—that is to say, he cannot pack his fibre suit-case, rope it round, take his mattress on his shoulder, and lie asleep on the steps of a railway station in wait for an early morning train to Omsk or Vladivostock. But within the village-commune itself, which has no walls and no bolts, he is perfectly at liberty to come and go and to express himself as he sees fit. There are, of course, some punishable offences, of which drinking spirits within the commune is one of the chief.

A strapping young man in a loose Russian blouse, breeches and high boots of soft leather, told us that he was now in charge of one of the dormitories. He came here originally from one of the ordinary houses of correction. As he showed us round the buildings men and women, inmates still under sentence, greeted and spoke to him in easy, friendly terms. He appeared to be happy in his work, and enthusiastic with the pleasing naive keenness of most Russians.

We looked into various class-rooms where illiter-

acy was being 'liquidated'—for naturally there is a very high percentage of illiteracy among those 'unregenerates'; into recreation rooms where men were practising on accordions; into art rooms whose walls were covered with sketches made by prisoners; into libraries and reading-rooms. Everywhere men were sitting unconstrainedly, their maximum eight hours of work over, indulging in whatever pastime most appealed to them.

Prisoners—I use this word for convenience, although in the commune it is never employed—are able to some extent to follow the trade that they like best, for there are various factories for the making of shoes, imitation leather goods, musical instruments, and so on, and there are also a farm, an electrical repair shop, and an incubator. For the first three months newcomers work without pay, but after that period they receive wages and their first half-holiday when they may pay a visit to Moscow. At the end of a year they are given a holiday of from two weeks to one month. They do not run away because by this time they know they are better off in the commune. Escapers may get into trouble again, and if so they go through the courts in the ordinary way, but if they tell the assessor that they are from the commune they are sent back there. Naturally, they prefer the commune to the gaol.

An interesting section of the main building is that given over to married couples—for prisoners may bring their wives and families with them, or they may marry while they are here either female prisoners like themselves or women from outside. Each couple has a small apartment consisting of an entrance, which holds a cooking stove, and a main room which can be furnished with the tenant's wages and to his own taste. Some of these apartments are quite charming. One, I remember, contained a shining new nickel bedstead, a high dresser, a table, comfortable chairs, a rug. The bedspread and curtains were of a rough openwork lace, very white and fresh. Here the husband and wife were sitting down to dinner, and the wife—on our appearance—excitedly made it known to the guide that she could speak a little German. But it was very little. We tried her with various questions without success. At last—

'Haben Sie Kinder?' we asked.

'Da!'—and she smiled—'Eins!' She held up one finger for our greater understanding. Her child was then in the commune's crèche.

Food is cooked at home or it can be brought in from the restaurant or eaten there. The restaurant is like a large cafeteria. Dinner costs about 18 cents. The menu is pinned up on the wall, with the name of the dietitian on it (prisoners take this work in turn), so that if there are any complaints the right individual can be directly approached.

We went through all the work-rooms of the factory for musical instruments, saw the planing of wood, the fitting together of parts, the stringing and varnishing and, finally, the tuning. Beautiful, polished balalaikas lay ready to be shipped off. Small pieces of wood that remain over are made into the painted peasant dolls that one can buy in any Torgsin shop for a few cents. Here there was no head-breaking intensity at the benches. Work went on at a reasonable pace.

In any ordinary gaol, work which is voluntary, is found to be advantageous to the prisoner, for every two working days count as three days of his sentence. But here—for the worst offenders—work is regarded as a salvation and it is obligatory. It is paid work and it gives independence. At the end of his term the prisoner is not a cowed individual who must earn his bread with difficulty and sink about the world in an agony of concealment or sink farther into crime. He is a man who has already lived a fairly full citizen's life, with the pleasures and responsibilities of citizenship. In five and a half years only one freed offender has failed—and he was sent back to the commune to be given another chance. This, I think, is a very fair record.

It seemed to me that, in this Bolshevik prison, the traditional idea of retribution for wrong-doing had dropped completely out of the picture. Criminality may be the result of many varying circumstances, not least of which is the unsuccess of the individual to fit himself usefully into the life of his community. The prison authorities, like the crime doctors of Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, were concerned solely with the cure. And to this end they had created a social organization parallel with and, in most respects, similar to the normal life of any small socialist community. Here the newcomer found a place, found a home and, above all, found in the self-made life of the prison community the social suasion which would act upon him so as to make him enjoy life best when living most usefully.

In a word, this Soviet prison is an institution which stage-manages criminals into living a crime-free, self-supporting, normal life—which gives them the habit and with it the enjoyment of useful living. The Bolshevik motive is not primarily humanitarian, however. It is utilitarian and commonsense.

Indeed the choice of the most undisciplined malefactors for this experiment was to me—standing within the commune itself—the only irrational thing about it. But that, of course, was Bolshevik audacity!

FREEDOM CRUCIFIED

Black clouds shake with anger!
Thirst mad waters lick the molten ground!
Light'ning rages rive the purple winds!
Groans, bellows, shrieks, ascend—from nowhere!
Vapours of gloom transcend valleys, hills and rivers.
..... Wherefore?

See'st thou yon daughter of the muse?
O weep before thine eyes behold her!
She, who, in spirit was perched upon the eagle's
wing,
Who held concourse with the winds,
And spoke their language;
Who felt the turmoil of the ocean,
And its wild expanse;
Who, with the bondaged lion, roared in unison,
Now, with cords of iron to a rotting stump lies
bound,
From whose foul odours emanate vile poisons
That feed upon her rich red blood,
And suck away her fastly ebbing strength!

See'st thou the shadow of a tear that courses
Slowly down the death afflicted face?

O Sappho, art thou, thus, brought so low?
And has unthinking man so soon destroyed thee?
And did not the Gods, once even intercept?

She lifts her eye. O piteous sight!
If ever mind can picture freedom bound,
'Twas in that glance!

She speaks, and yet 'tis not her voice
But some deep sad viol estranged from earth
That murmurs a dirge to death.
It ceases—and her head falls back;
While stinging wires pierce through her flesh
Till drops of rusted blood stand out—
Mute omens of despair!

O Sappho, for that undaunted spirit, wild beauty's
mate,
Resist—O let not death usurp thy rightful throne!
If even Gods can fail, be thou above them!
Where they are fickle, show thyself as constant!
And by thyself—thy faltering self—be saved!

A light'ning burst from out her frame emerges:
It sings black the stifling knots and cords,
And they as worn out serfs fall limp and broken,
While she ascends . . . a tall and Godlike form.

JENA SIVITZ

TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

Alas, our poor distracted country, when it
Has groaned four years in teaching Mr. Bennett,
See it now facing, the poor patient thing,
Four years of educating Mr. King.

MERCUTIO.

THE CANADIAN FORUM, while welcoming manuscripts of general articles, stories, and verse, is not at present paying for material.

RED VIENNA

By DONALD GRANT

IMMEDIATELY after the close of the Great War a wave of democratic enthusiasm flowed over a considerable part of Europe. Behind this democratic movement was the influence of the ideals and purposes proclaimed so widely during the war; the influence, also, in Central Europe and Germany, of the disappointment and disillusionment of the populations with regard to their former rulers. In many countries the Socialists came into power; but only for a year or two, or even less.

Since 1919 Vienna City Council has had a Socialist majority. This fact has enabled the city to apply many progressive ideas in municipal government. The result of this application of socialist or semi-socialist ideas in Vienna is that the city has become well known throughout the world. Wherever there is an interest in social politics, especially in housing schemes for the poorer strata of the population, there Vienna, with her decade of constructive work, has an established reputation for what she has done. People who have never visited Vienna have heard of Sandleiten, of Karl Marx Hof and other well-known housing blocks containing workers' flats. In the Sandleiten complex of buildings about 8,000 people live in excellent housing conditions. In Karl Marx Hof there are flats for 1,400 families.

Besides the housing schemes Vienna has notable achievements in her municipal welfare work, her elementary school reform, her proletarian cultural work, and other enterprises. Every year tens of thousands of visitors to Vienna coming from other lands, make a point of seeing as much as possible of the new housing schemes, the wide-spread welfare work (especially for children and mothers), the famous municipal kindergartens or nursery schools, swimming baths, paddling pools, open spaces, and other manifestations of the City Council's purpose and programme.

Two crying needs confronted the Vienna municipality after the war—the acute housing shortage, and the impoverishment of the population. The policy which has made Vienna so famous, is the outcome of the municipality's persevering effort collectively to meet these great needs. In the ten years since 1923 Vienna's housing policy has produced flats of the kind mentioned to the number of 65,000. Some of these great blocks consist of a number of adjoining buildings with open spaces, even short streets running through them, and idyllic courtyards and gardens here and there. Others are of the palace-cum-fortress pattern, like the Karl Marx Hof; others again, more simply, a kind of large tenement of flats.

Life in one of these municipal houses involves a certain amount of communal arrangements, the use of which is extremely cheap and convenient, but not compulsory. Among these arrangements are laundries, baths, libraries, kindergartens, social and educational activities.

The security of tenure which is so marked a feature of the municipal housing scheme, provides a kind of anchor to tens of thousands of unemployed

workers. In Vienna unemployment cannot lead to lack of shelter among those housed in municipal dwellings. Inability to pay the rent does not lead to eviction where the city is the landlord. The collective effort whereby the great housing need in Vienna is gradually being met is the tax on rents, instituted in 1923. This tax is progressive and is the principal source of funds with which the municipal housing of Vienna has been financed. It is a notable fact that no debts or loans have been incurred in this housing programme.

Although anti-socialists in Austria are responsible for the label 'Red Vienna', the title has been accepted and widely used by the Vienna Socialists. As a matter of fact, the Socialism of the Vienna Corporation is not very red. Rather it is a moderate kind of municipal socialism. Its characteristic feature has been, not theories about the system of distribution or of production, but the direct tackling of large problems of city life as a great capital and an industrial city present them, without attaching labels to the procedure. The City Council was aware of great and crying needs of the population. It set out to meet these by collective effort. The work of the socialist city council of Vienna in the past ten years has resulted in something like a new environment for life by institutional means. Unfortunately no real study of this new phenomenon in human values has been made as yet; increasingly, however, those who know Vienna well, do realize that her housing, welfare, educational, sport, and cultural achievements are only aspects of one central fact which links them all together into one significant whole. That central fact has two aspects: on the one hand the workers of Vienna believe in themselves, in their own status and values. Consequently they are not imitating the bourgeois or other wealthier classes. They believe in and develop their own programme of housing, welfare, sport—successfully.

On the other hand, the workers of Vienna, believing definitely in themselves, and able to employ only the most meagre financial resources per head, are yet living a life which culturally is on a comparatively high level. In these days of transition, when the question of leadership in society is so much debated, the implications, political and economic, of the experiences and achievement of socialist Vienna are of far-reaching importance.

During the past year developments in Austria have led to a more open and acute form of the conflict between the city of Vienna and the state government in Austria—a conflict which, in one form or another, has been going on for years. The rise of the Fascist tide, the overthrow of the power of Parliament, the antagonism of the non-socialist part of the population to the radical measures taken by the municipality, all of these have threatened the work and achievements of the city council. The government, unable to attack directly and immediately the party which still held the majority in the capital, set out to destroy the financial resources of the municipal government. It withheld the consti-

tutionally guaranteed share of the city in the proceeds of national taxation. It withdrew from the City Council the right to collect national taxes in the city, thus depriving it of the amount arranged as payment for performing this duty. It imposed a direct levy on the city by decree under the name of *Lastenbeitrag*—i.e., a 'contribution to burdens' of the state. Finally, it interfered with the revenue derived by the city from entertainments tax. All these attacks deprived the City Council of a budgeted sum of 108.37 million schillings. (£3 million at par).

As each blow fell the City Council set out to meet it by whatever means lay in its power; for instance, by stopping the work on the municipal housing schemes, thus unavoidably throwing many workers out of employment; or by reducing pensions and drawing upon the reserves of the gas and electricity departments. In such ways all the heavy deficit has been met with the exception of 35.21

million schillings, a sum almost exactly equal to the unexpected *Lastenbeitrag* imposed in August last. So that Vienna can show a balanced budget—at an enormously high price. It should also be remembered that the economic depression, quite apart from the inroads made by the government, had already compelled the Vienna Council to reduce expenditure all round. To be able, after all these catastrophic blows to its finances, to produce a balanced budget for 1934, is sufficient witness to the foresight and ability with which the finances of this socialist city have been managed during the last ten years.

Unfortunately, it seems more than likely that the attacks on this great effort to build up a new and more adequate kind of life for the working people of Vienna have not come to an end; the Dollfuss Government proclaims the setting up of the corporate state and war on the socialist idea, even in the moderate form Vienna had so successfully adopted.

PORE OLD DEVIL

By M. CONWAY TURTON

THE blade sprang back in a curve from its delicate sheep-horn handle: its edge was as keen as a razor from copper ferrule to tapered point. The sharp backward curve of steel moved endlessly over the stone, up and then back and then down. Dalton's eyes followed the blade, and his mind followed it with reluctance, but also with dull resignation, since there was nothing else in the cabin that could any longer be watched or thought about. He knew too well the dark, long shapes of wolf-skins hanging from nails against the logs of the wall, and the shorter shapes of marten and fisher and mink. He knew the dim angle of the bunks in the corner, and the rumpled folds of blankets and coyote robes that lay upon the bunks. He knew the dirty little square of the window, through which the daylight came dimly down to the grooved and greasy planks of the floor. If he were to lift his eyes he would see all these shadows and shapes again; it was better to watch the blade and try to think.

As Dalton tried to think, he became vaguely aware of pain; not pain felt at the moment, but pain that he had forgotten and was beginning to remember. That pain must have been the last thing of which he had been fully aware; he must have been too ill since then to know what else had happened. Yes, that was it. He had been ill when Tom and Frank went away with the dogs to their trap-lines. And they had stood at the door and said . . . he could not remember what they had said, but there had been a little rum in a bottle. They had left the rum for him. And the knife was going up and back and down. They had left the rum; he must have been very ill, or they would not have left it for him. But a little dark curl of oil had gathered at the base of the blade. Perhaps it would slip under the edge, on to the stone again, with careful watching. How long ago had that happened? When would they be coming back? But the curl of oil still clung to the edge of the blade, like a tiny black snake. Dalton found the black snake of oil so unbearable that with an effort he shut

his mind to it and watched the hand instead. The muscles were moving almost imperceptibly under great knotted veins, and at each slight turn a frayed piece of cuff entangled itself with the dark hair of the wrist. Separate threads of red wool and black wool dangled from the checked red and black of the sleeve, trailing in a ragged fringe over the edge of the whet-stone. A man was sharpening a knife in Dalton's cabin. But why? When had he come? Why must he be watched like this? The questions flung themselves over and over again at the door of Dalton's mind; he groped for understanding, but was each time baffled and defeated. And the knife went rhythmically up, implacably back and down over the stone. But at each attempt to break through that rhythm, his desire to understand became more insistent; at each defeat, his resentment rose a little higher. Still labouring to comprehend, still uncomprehending, he felt a sudden surge of violent panic that brought him trembling to his feet.

'For Christ's sake, quit whetting that knife!'

He did not know whether he had shouted the words or thought them, but they rang loudly in his ears as he lurched to the door, dragged his parka and rifle from their nails and stumbled out of the cabin.

A glare of snow and sunlight met him as he stood swaying outside the door; he turned and covered his face with his hand, and wiped his eyes against the rough sleeve of his mackinaw. The next glance revealed to him only a swimming, swaying world of white, but there was cold air on his hands and neck, and such a sudden absence of smell that he thought he could smell the snow. He was leaning now with his body to the wall of the cabin, his hands pressed against the ice-covered logs, his head against the little window. He was neither thinking nor trying to remember, but as though for the first time in his life he was feeling the actual texture and temperature and shape of things, feeling the weakness and the tenacity of his own body as it clung to the wall.

It was a long time before he realized that his head was pressed against the outside of the dirty little window; the thought puzzled him, and he played with it until it appeared to him to be a really funny thought. As though for the first time, he laughed. Yes, of course, there are two sides to every window! But why on earth had he not done this before? He was strong enough to stand; he must have been strong enough for a long time now. And he had been sitting in there, stupefied and dazed, watching that fool whetting a knife! He peered through the pane, which was all frosted now with his breath, but he could see only darkness behind the glancing reflections of snow on the glass.

For the next half-hour Dalton sat upon the saw-horse outside the cabin door. He had struggled into his parka, and drawn out of its deep pocket his padded moose-hide gloves; he had propped his rifle up beside him, and had taken down his snow-shoes from under the eve of the cabin. But he had not yet dared to lift his eyes again to the white glare of the country: he waited, looking at his gloves—no, he'd never be a squawman; no kloochee could ever be induced to make glove-fingers properly—he tied the string of his parka round his neck, and adjusted the hood so that its fur trimming came closely round his face. He was waiting for strength and for the tears to stop clouding and stinging his eyes. He was waiting also for something that he knew would come; some thought or feeling that would tell him what to do next. And as he waited with bowed head, he felt himself go through a door in his mind, out into the light. The sun was faintly warm on his face and the wind was sharp; he knew as he sat there that it must be early April, that his partners were already due back, that they would be coming perhaps at this very moment down the river with the season's catch on their sleighs. The feeling of the air, and of the hard crust beneath his moccasins, brought back all the old instincts and habits that had slipped from him during those weeks of illness. And then a sudden question presented itself. He sat abruptly upright, staring at the door. What should he do about the fellow in there? It was strange, he thought, that the man had not followed him out. Perhaps he had been there for weeks, and had come to take no notice of the sick man he had found in the cabin. Dalton's first idea was to go in again and tackle the fellow, but it was followed immediately by fear. After all, there might be trouble. Perhaps . . . ah, now he had it! Of course the man would not follow him out; he would trust to luck that the sudden exposure would do its work, and rid him of his encumbrance. Dalton chuckled inwardly, promising himself a sweet revenge when he was stronger; perhaps Tom and Frank would be back today, and that would settle the affair. He decided to go up-river a little way in the hope of meeting them.

Dalton stood up, and was surprised to feel his legs quite steady beneath him; he shuffled his moccasins in the snow to rub the slippery smoothness from them, and then picked up his rifle and snow-shoes and walked away from the cabin. The glistening surface upon which he walked was unbroken by any tracks; the crust was thick and hard and even, and the sun had done no more than melt the topmost layer. He watched the sparkling of this crust that was like snow to the eyes and like ice to the feet; he

felt the drag of his moccasins as they picked up the moisture from the melting surface. He walked for many minutes, wholly obsessed with the progress of his feet, until the white glare before him was broken by hard blue bars of shadow. As his moccasins crossed from sunlight to shade, he looked up from them to find himself enfolded by the green and gold of a spruce grove. Round the bases of the dark tree-trunks the snow sank in soft blue hollows, and over the shining rims of these sunken circles the lowest branches of the trees spread out in irregular points of green and brown. He looked into the depths of the friendly boughs where the needles grew most thickly, and then up through the tapering branches, up over the sparse tips of the trees to a mass of distant white and purple against a hard blue sky. Mountains; Stikine mountains in the distance. His heart leaped to them, as though for the first time. Yet all his life had been spent in loving just such a line of distant mountains. Every winter for thirty years he had trapped and hunted and waited for the break-up. Every summer he had looked for gold in mountain creeks and on the river bars. And almost every year had seen him further north, over the next range, into the farther valley, into a country that would surely be rich in gold or richer in fur or better for moose and caribou. And so he had come after many years to live among the peaks and canyons of the northern Rockies, far north in British Columbia, far enough north at last.

Beyond the grove, the sunlight glared again upon an unbroken white stretch of snow. The river lay ahead, its far bank rising in a stark grey wall of stone. Dalton walked to the edge, and looked down into the narrow ice-bound channel. There were groanings and creakings down there, between him and the grey wall opposite. Under the folded layers of snow, the ice was straining and cracking. Under the straining ice the water forced its hidden way between ice and rock and jagged bed, down to the still narrower channel of the canyon. Tom and Frank had better hurry, if they hoped to come down on the ice. Dalton looked up-stream, almost expecting to see them swing round the curve of the river; and as he paused, vaguely hoping to hear a shout or a bark, a sharp crackling sound came faintly on the wind. He was startled. He dropped his snow-shoes and fumbled with the cover of his rifle. The buckle was rusty, and his fingers were rather cold, but at last he drew the rifle out and started to walk up-wind along the bank, toward a little creek from which the sound had come. The snow was slippery here, on the curve of the bank; he struck off through the trees and entered the creek valley just above the river. And there, not a hundred yards away, a moose was moving slowly along the edge of the creek, its head above the wavy line of willows. Dalton watched it, fascinated. He could not believe that it was unconscious of his presence; the sound of the broken branch had been so near, so distinct. The moose moved slowly away, in ungainly dignity, while Dalton watched. And then, after a long time, he quite suddenly raised his rifle, took a hurried aim and fired. The pattern of the antlers dropped from sight, leaving the bare line of willows against the snow. Dalton stood perfectly still, hardly grasping the significance of his act. And then his whole being warmed with life, as though for the first time. He

was in sunlight, he had looked at his mountains again, and he had shot a moose. Slithering down the slope, running along the uneven ice of the creek, pushing among the willows, he made his way toward the fallen moose, wondering as he did so what he had been living on all winter—dried meat and biscuits, he supposed; he could not remember. But he knew that his life had today been resumed; the weakness that he felt was in itself a kind of pleasure, in that it recalled to him his long years of hardship, linked him with all his past efforts. He took a fierce delight in the sensation of pitting his weak body against the hard strength of nature; he rejoiced in the fact that he had shot straight, weak and ill though he was. He wanted to tell someone how he had regained his manhood, how he had escaped into the cold air and the sunlight. And all this time he kept his eyes upon the spot where the moose had fallen. He could see the dark bulge of its carcase now, lying on the snow. But surely the body moved? He had not shot so straight, after all. As he covered the remaining stretch of ground, he unslung his rifle again; he would soon put that right. He saw with sudden pity the noble spread of the antlers, the great curve of the shoulders against the snow; swiftly, because of his pity, he pressed his rifle behind the moose's head, and pulled the trigger. Nothing happened. And the moose was still alive, terribly alive, though it hardly moved. The knife, then. He groped under the canvas skirt of his parka, and along his belt. The knife was not there. He stood for one blank moment in utter bewilderment. And then he remembered that knife on the whetstone—his own knife! Damn that fellow!

Sobbing and panting for breath, Dalton struggled up the slope beside the creek. His plunging feet were breaking through the crust; he could not see where he was going. His parka caught on a tree; he tore it off, and stumbled forward again. The snow

was slippery beneath his feet; he was back on the river-bank. The weakness of his body was now an added goad to his angry mind; the sunlight on the snow was there to blind him; the cold wind pierced his mackinaw, numbed him, punished him. And there were sharp stones cutting his moccasins, bruising his feet; he looked up, and stood in horror gazing at the gaping mouth of the canyon—he had come too far down-river, past the cabin. In a panic he turned and retraced his steps, dragging himself painfully over the hard crust of the snow. After a timeless blundering he caught sight of the cabin wall, and made toward it. He groped for the door, staggered through it and sank exhausted into its familiar gloom.

The dark, long shapes and the shorter shapes hung darkly in front of his eyes; he turned from them, and saw the dim angle of the bunks in the shadowy corner. His mind struggled back to consciousness; his eyes searched the gloom. The light from the dirty little window struck blue upon the blade of the skinning-knife. That was it. That was what he wanted; he had come back for the knife, a long time ago. But it was moving up and back and down over the whetstone. He bent his returning consciousness to hatred of that enslaving motion; he remembered what had spoilt his moment of triumph, a long time ago, beside the moose. He waited, watching helplessly, until words in his head began to synchronize with the knife: 'It must stop; it must stop; it must stop.' And at last, under cover of that rhythm of words a thought broke suddenly loose in his head: 'Clutch it, then! Turn it!'

The knife stopped. The blade swung round.

* * *

'Good God, Tom! Come and look! Old Dalton must've gone bughouse. He's killed himself, and he took both hands to it, too. Pore old devil!'

MIDSUMMER MADNESS

By D. C. McARTHUR

'ASS!' said the Rt. Hon. Baxter Macleod with a sudden explosive ferocity.

In the Press Gallery he was known as the 'Pop-Gun'. The pop-gun delivery, transferred from the acoustical spaciousness of the House to the living-room of his home, became a shell-burst.

Mrs. Baxter Macleod put down her pencil and looked at her husband with flattering attentiveness. There was, she had decided after twenty years of adroit experiment, no successful alternative to this technique.

'Ling was an ass when we were at college, he was an ass when he went into politics—clever and plausible, but fundamentally, congenitally, as ass. His friends have known it, but now he has turned their private conviction into a public scandal—shouting it to the world at the top of his lungs—yes, at the top of his lungs!'

The Rt. Hon. Mr. Macleod punctuated this opinion with a series of forefinger lunges at the front page of the *Evening Observer*. He handed the sheet to his wife.

Centred by a three-column cut of James Latimer Ling, K.C., M.P., the front page was given over to an account of the Opposition leader's opening election rally. Jimmy Ling had sung three songs, and two encores, at his meeting. In college days, Mrs. Macleod recalled, he had been one of the brighter lights in the Glee Club—he had even picked up a bit of money, barnstorming little towns, singing at garden parties and strawberry festivals. Equipped with a tenor voice of peculiarly tender and insinuating quality, he had developed the crooner style years before the continent became crooner-conscious. As he grew stouter and balder and politically prominent, Ling had relegated his vocalizing to a very private niche. Rarely—perhaps as a guest at the Press Gallery dinner—had he permitted this bit of juvenilia to become public. Now, all shame cast to the winds, he had entertained the mob by crooning three songs, and two encores, at a great public gathering held in the interest of the historic party which was handicapped and humiliated by his leadership. . . .

'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad,' said the Hon. Mr. Macleod comfortably. Indignation at Jimmy Ling's asininity had given place to a conviction that his rival's lightmindedness, at this critical time in the nation's history, was an ill wind that could blow nothing but good.

Mrs. Macleod returned to her pencil and notes. Wife of the Prime Minister, she was president of the Cabinet Wives' Circle, a feminine board of strategy of unquestioned political power. Mrs. Macleod had been working on a paper for their next meeting; it was on the subject of 'Stateswomen of the Past'. The stack of books from the Parliamentary Library had given her plenty of influential ladies of the 18th Century courts, and modern cabinet ministers' wives, as moulders of public policy.

* * *

Before the first week of the campaign was over, bill-boards from sea to sea were plastered with the enormous red letters of the new slogan, 'Sing With Ling!' If the gods had made Jimmy Ling mad, the country was going mad with him. Weary with years of barren discussion of abstruse economic matters, upon which all the experts disagreed, the people were turning the election campaign into a wild Saturnalia of forgetfulness. Maddest of all were the women voters; a fan mail of staggering proportions swamped the Ling headquarters, demanding photographs of the crooning Opposition leader. By printing the photos on a mass production basis, and charging the women a small 'contributory' fee, the campaign managers were able to put the party finances on a basis of unprecedented soundness, with no embarrassing sense of obligation.

A staff of song writers turned out a steady stream of melody to sweep a song-conscious nation off its political feet. Through it all ran the Ling theme song, written and sponsored by the leader himself, the unforgettable 'Prosperity Blues'. Every school-boy whistled it, housewives sang it softly as they plied their irons, huge crowds slipped into the spell of its swooning melody, faced the future with fresh confidence as the high hopefulness of the chorus stirred them:—

We can all make hay
When the sun comes back to stay,
So let's sing-a-Ling our way
To Pros-per-i-ty!

Back of all the crooning, Ling had an astute programme of currency reform; he was an advocate of Tri-metallism. All currency, said Ling, should be backed by an amalgam of gold, iron, and lead, in which the demands of beauty, utility, and durability would be satisfied. Macleod and the Government stood on the solid rock of the Convertible Paper Standard. It was a subject upon which the Prime Minister was a formidable authority; the Paper Standard was his oyster, and his meetings were oyster suppers. But the fickle and lightminded public, through some inscrutable psychological twist, did not want to understand the Convertible Paper Standard; they wanted to sing.

* * *

Mrs. Macleod rapped an admonitory knuckle on the tea table. One of the members of the Cabinet Wives' Circle, in a mood of heavy burlesque, had been parodying Ling's crooning.

'It's perfectly beastly stuff, of course,' said Mrs. Macleod, 'and politics aside, I really liked Jimmy Ling a lot. But there are such important things at stake—that's what makes it so hard to forgive him. If he has caught the people in a mid-summer madness, we have got to do something more effective than pointing the finger of scorn. The Government simply must be returned! If Mr. Ling is prepared to take advantage of mob foolishness, then we must be ready to take even greater advantage of it. If the people insist upon being entertained instead of being informed, then we must provide the best entertainment!'

The Circle was attentively silent.

'If Jimmy Ling can make people sing, our husbands must make people laugh. Laughter is the best of all vote catchers. When Baxter and the other boys appear on the platform, each one must do some sort of turn, as the vaudeville people say. As a start I have taught Baxter a joke, to introduce his talk on the Convertible Paper Standard. I suggest that we go into committee immediately and canvass all the possibilities.'

The possibilities were encouraging. After some initial hesitancy, wives of men eminent in public life confessed that in the privacy of the home circle their men folk found curious outlets for an atavistic boyishness of spirit. The Hon. Charles W. D. Winington-Smith, for instance—the lean, ascetic-looking Minister of Finance who looked 'so remarkably like the late Joseph Chamberlain'—the Hon. Charles, it seemed, was an amateur master of eccentric step-dances. Colonel Mark Murphy, the Defense Minister, a man of awesome military impressiveness, did screamingly funny take-offs of a Cockney sergeant-major. Patriarchal old Tom McCorquodale, the Minister of Agriculture, was a whole barnyard in full chorus; his imitations were life-like to a degree, although very silly, as Mrs. McCorquodale confessed. Hon. William Dummer, who was raised in a back township of old Ontario, still amused his grandchildren with an accordion; he could play 'Money Musk' and 'Turkey in the Straw' with the best of them. As for the two Quebec members of the Cabinet, Rodolphe Letourneau and Donat Desmarais, they were willing to sing their heads off on any occasion; it ran in the blood.

Altogether, the Rt. Hon. Baxter Macleod's colleagues had in them the makings of a very fair minstrel show. There was no doubt that the ladies of the Cabinet Wives' Council could whip their husbands into line; the situation was sufficiently desperate.

* * *

Snap, punch, and continuity for the Cabinet performance were given by dynamic little Maxie Eisewine. Maxie, as everyone knows, has been responsible for every big Broadway success since the war. Mrs. Macleod, on the advice of the party publicity manager, smuggled him to Ottawa, and the watchdog of the party treasury alone knows what Maxie took back with him. It went a bit against the grain to have to resort to an American importation; still, the cause was a noble one—and someone said that Maxie's mother had once been on the stage in the Old Country. . . .

Canadian Cabinet Ministers and Broadway

hoofers were all one to Maxie; over a week-end of strange and feverish activity the boys were put through their paces. The only serious obstacle was the enormous and Jovian dignity of the Prime Minister himself; nothing could dent the immutably solemn facade of the Rt. Hon. Baxter Macleod. The point of his single prefatory joke he unvaryingly forgot; like a stately galleon laden with bullion he sailed, at each rehearsal, into an immediate exposition of his theory of money.

'That guy's a complete washout,' Maxie told the agitated ladies of the Circle. It was decided to sandwich the Prime Minister's talk into the middle of the performance, and make the best of it.

* * *

Mrs. Macleod, Mrs. Winnington-Smith and Mrs. Murphy had chosen seats in the centre of the great hall. They wanted to see at first hand the effect of the new presentation on the people. The hall was jammed and an overflow crowd clamored in the street; the local committee had done effective work. A little band of Opposition supporters in the gallery created some disturbance by singing Ling's more recent favourites, and the crowd good-naturedly applauded. . . . Then the big band blared into a lively quick-step that Maxie had brought red-hot from Broadway, and the Prime Minister and his Cabinet filed into their semi-circle of seats. Letourneau, the lively Postmaster-General (with that touch of French accent that always charms an English-speaking crowd), took charge as master of ceremonies.

The crowd, for the most part loyal Government supporters, had come in a mood that was heavily apprehensive of the fare that would be offered. They knew their Baxter. They had been tolerant of the earlier singing of Opposition melodies because, like the rest of the country, they wanted to forget their troubles. . . . And then, as the Hon. William Dummer pulled his accordion from under his coat-tails, and crashed into 'The Turkey in the Straw', and Winnington-Smith threw those long, limber legs of his into the most amazing twists and turns, like a cow-boy with two lariats—the crowd went mad with astonishment and delight. Even the Oppositionists cheered and stamped and slapped strangers on the back with the rest of them. Poor Jimmy Ling and his crooning—it seemed a bit pitiful.

Maxie Eisenwine, for once in a cock-sure life, proved to be a false prophet in Israel. Warmed into a mood of hilarious and unquestioning joyousness, the crowd took the Rt. Hon. Baxter Macleod to its heart; he was the star funny man of the show. Launching with unshaken solemnity into his speech on the Paper Standard, the Prime Minister achieved an unanticipated success—he threw them into a convulsive crescendo of laughter.

'The Convertible Paper Standard,' he said, 'is a nation's criterion of integrity . . . to maintain the inviolability of our national integrity the Paper Standard must be maintained. . . . For the purpose of purely theoretical exposition, we may issue a currency that is either convertible or inconvertible, but in the latter contingency . . .'

People laughed until the tears rolled down their cheeks, they held their tummies, they rocked to and fro and punched their neighbours in the ribs. 'Look, look!' men shouted at one another, 'he never

cracks a smile—old Baxter's got them all licked!' No jokester is as devastating as the solemn jokester. Baxter was a wow.

* * *

Gales of laughter echoed from the Rockies to the Laurentians, did not die out before election day, carried the government of the Rt. Hon. Baxter Macleod into power again with a majority quite unparalleled in the country's history.

'It was a mood, of course,' remarked the Prime Minister to his wife, 'a mood of mid-summer madness. I should not like to consider it a precedent.'

'I'm not sure,' said Mrs. Macleod. 'After all, those old-fashioned political meetings were pretty dull—you will admit that the men needed a few drinks before they could even pretend to be enthusiastic . . . those long speeches . . . I'm not sure . . .'

'At all events,' said the Prime Minister, 'we have saved the country for the Paper Standard.'

In the course of a few weeks after the Government had been returned to power, circumstances that had been altogether unforeseen forced the Prime Minister to abandon the Convertible Paper Standard. But the people were quite unperturbed; they thought that it was the point of the joke that he had been trying to tell them during the election.

THE CHEAT

There was an angel with a flaming sword
Stood guard before the gateway in the wall
And looked at Adam. Sleepy over all
His careless, common warmth the great sun poured.
Then Adam whispered, 'Wait no longer, Lord.
We sinned, Thou sayest, Eve and I. Let fall
This cruel curtain, hung to hide the gall
And sorrow Thou hast set on our new board.

It cannot cozen us—there lies behind
Some sheer, waste thing, some stripe to match the
Why must Thou veil it with a bitter blind, [sin.
Making this world seem fair as that within?
Lord, Lord, Thou leavest me my ears and eyes—
I do not call this worse than Paradise!

W. A. BREYFOGLE.

ENOS PELL

I wander daisy slopes of Enos Pell,
Whose farm was here a century ago,
And watch the swirl of summer ripples blow
Across the stretch of field he knew so well.
I breathe the nearby drift of forest smell
And see the rounds of shafted cloud that glow
Behind the swamp, a robin dipping low
Along where shaded meadows curve and swell.

O You that laboured then in future trust,
No measured line or title-deed assures
Possession; I have caught each idle gust,
The mist of flowers, the roll of green contours—
I have the world of you that now are dust
And only moments, Enos Pell, were yours!

ALAN B. CREIGHTON.



WESTWARD BY THE OTTAWA

FIVE FUR TRADERS OF THE NORTHWEST; being the narrative of Peter Pond, and the diaries of John Macdonnell, Archibald N. McLeod, Hugh Faries, and Thomas Connor; edited by Charles M. Gates, with an introduction by Grace Lee Nute (University of Minnesota Press—Ryerson Press; pp. 298; \$4.25).

CANADIANS, and particularly students of the fur trade, are brought under fresh obligations to American scholars for this additional contribution to a field of common interest. The Minnesota Society of the Colonial Dames of America by their support to the publication of this volume have made available diaries of interest to the State of Minnesota but perhaps of even greater interest to Canada. Excluding the narrative of Peter Pond, the diaries are concerned with the activities of traders of the Northwest Company and, with the further exception of Connor's diary, with Canadian territory adjacent to the State of Minnesota. The diary of John Macdonnell in 1793 includes perhaps the best account extant, not excepting that of Alexander MacKenzie, of the well-worn route of the fur traders from Lachine up to the Ottawa, across to the French River, Georgian Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Grand Portage, and Lake Winnipeg. Here is noted the location of existing forts, of old French posts, of drownings of eleven men at Lake Nipissing, and of an equal number of crosses at Pic, and the meeting of men-competitors and fellow traders of the Company. It was an important year. He saw the 'Otter' under construction in Lake Superior, and on its first arrival at Grand Portage where 1,000 men were on reduced rations awaiting her cargo of provisions. He saw the veterans Robert Grant and Peter Pangman taking final leave of the West. On the route from Grand Portage to Lake Winnipeg they overtook Donald McKay and a Mr. Sutherland, representing the first attempt of the Hudson's Bay Company to penetrate the district by the Albany River, an ill omen to the peace of the region.

The following diary of Norman McLeod for 1800-1 is a description of activities in what is now Northern Manitoba with a centre at Fort Alexandria. Harmon's published journal throws much light on this area, but the diary presents the whole in sharp focus. The slight competition of Forsyth Richardson on Lake Superior and of Messrs. David and Peter Grant in the interior in 1793 had increased with the movement of traders from the south following Jay's treaty, the organization of the X. Y. Company, and the increasing importance of the Hudson's Bay Company. Although immediate Hudson's Bay Company opposition was represented by one who 'of all the stupid puppies I ever set eyes, he is the most nonsensical and dull', the general situation was ominous. 'I gave the Vent du Nord as much rum as he could drink and I am very apprehensive

he and the rest of the band mean to go to Lower Fort des Prairies, they hearing such tempting accounts of low goods, etc., liquors are lavished on the Indians that go there, both by our people and the Petit Poté (X. Y.) as well as the Hudson's Bay Company's servants'. The diary is a record of constant vigil over competitors, of letters from adjoining posts; 'Mr. King writes me the Universall story—Short of goods!!!', of sending goods to those in need, of receiving goods from those with stocks, of urging the hunters to activity, of making pemmican (125 bags), and of packing furs (80 bags), for shipment to the lower depots and outside. Iroquois hunters have been imported as more efficient. The most ominous entries refer to the exchange of pemmican, blankets, guns, from the Hudson's Bay Company in return for wolves and badgers—such evidence was available in the latter days of the French regime and was a testimonial to the effectiveness of the Hudson Bay route which contributed to the downfall of St. Lawrence control first under the French and in 1821 under the Northwest Company.

The last two diaries dated 1804-5 are descriptive of similar territory west of Lake Superior at Rainy Lake and on the St. Croix River, and cover a period when competition with the X. Y. was at its peak, and amalgamation following the death of Simon McTavish inevitable. Grand Portage had been displaced by Fort William. At Lac la Pluie they learned of the amalgamation on January 12th, 1805, and on the St. Croix on December 31st, 1804. At the latter point on January 1st, 'sent the men . . . with orders to inform all the Indians of the X. Y. Co. destruction'. On January 8th the X. Y. representative 'agreed to everything I proposed with much good nature'. An agreement of a similar character was arranged at Lac la Pluie. But before the news every move was watched and followed up by the opposing company and at least one hand-to-hand scuffle was the result. At Lac la Pluie there are entries relating to wild rice, haying, the raising of potatoes, the making lisses for 90 canoes, the taking of sturgeon and whitefish, and other activities relating to a large depot such as that of the Athabasca brigade, and of a large fur trading area such as trapping and running *en derouine*. At both points the spring brought shooting of ducks and geese and making of maple sugar.

Throughout all the diaries references are made to births and deaths and frequent illnesses with blood lettings, emetics, purges and Turlington balsam. Fears of Indian uprisings and of damage as a result of drunkenness are mingled with the joys of celebration on Christmas and New Year's and on all occasions capable of being celebrated by a dance. John Macdonnell crossing the height of land beyond Lake Superior was baptized with a small cedar bow dipped in ditch water and required to demand a similar ceremony for other newcomers, and 'never to kiss a voyageur's wife against her own free will'. 'I complied and gave the men . . . a two gallon keg.' Wives were acquired without difficulty; 'took the slave woman whom next fall I shall sell for good price to one of the men.' 'I gave him the Devils daughter for 500 lb. G.P.C.' 'I sent two canoes off to Kaminitiquiac with 31 packs. My girl embarked in one of them to see her daughter.'

H. A. INNIS

SUMMER-SCHOOL POLITICS

THE LIBERAL WAY: A record of opinion on Canadian Problems as Expressed and Discussed at the First Liberal Summer Conference, Port Hope, September, 1933 (J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.; pp. 294; \$1.00).

CANADIAN PROBLEMS, as seen by Twenty Outstanding Men of Canada (Oxford University Press; pp. 320; \$2.00).

THE political summer school is an institution which has long been badly needed in Canada. Our party orators in the course of a year pour forth such torrents of meaningless rhetoric about the isms of their faith that some device is desirable for bringing together the more intelligent members of the party and enabling them to discuss coolly and realistically the relation of their professed principles to the practical problems of the day. But these two books which result from the first experiments along that line in Canada are inevitably issued under somewhat false pretenses. Though they make clear that they are not official expositions of party policies and beliefs, they lend an air of intellectual distinction to the two old parties to which neither of them has any claim. The papers in both books which are really worth reading are nearly all by professors who are either not members of the party in question or are advocating policies which have not the slightest chance of adoption by the party. The party politicians, when they spoke, confined themselves at Newmarket to matter-of-fact accounts of the problems of departmental administration for which they are directly responsible, and at Port Hope indulged mostly in soap-box stuff. But the innocent reader can hardly help taking away from the books an impression of open-mindedness and progressive thinking for which the practice of the parties both before and after the summer-schools gives no justification.

Of the published addresses in the two books the two worst are those of the two party leaders. One would hate to have a foreigner write an essay on the intellectual standards of Canadian public life as revealed by these speeches of our leaders. Mr. Bennett begins with some hazy recollections of his far-off undergraduate reading of Lecky and Maine, and then wanders through a series of moral platitudes (according to the book his subject was democracy on trial) with some misquoted poetry, ending up finally with the conclusion that 'life to me and to you is a trusteeship'. (Great applause.) After this the young gentlemen asked him questions, and he did commit himself to one definite statement—'I am not one of them who believe that unanimous consent on the part of all provinces is necessary in order for the constitution to be amended.' (Applause.) But if the stories which emanated from Newmarket last summer about an intellectual uprising of the Tory youth have any foundation, the young gentlemen whose questions are reported in the book must have been pulling their punches.

Mr. King's address at Port Hope appears in the wrong book. It is the most completely conservative statement delivered at either summer-school. After listening to the young Liberals for a week he admonishes them to remember that experience is as valuable as experiment. He reminds them how baffling human nature is. 'We can well afford at this

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time to put an even greater emphasis on what the past has to tell us than many of us are perhaps inclined to do'. 'I wonder if a political party is going to be better off by forgetting the past.' Such sentiments as those are perhaps unexceptionable, but this persistent looking backward is not exactly what one expects from a Liberal spokesman. And Mr. King's speech is entitled, 'The Practice of Liberalism'. There is not a hint in it of a single practical thing to which his party commits itself.

As for the professors, their contributions in the two volumes would make up an average number of the annual proceedings of the Canadian Political Science Association. Unfortunately in the Liberal volume the speeches of the round-table leaders are only given in a very condensed version, and these seem to have contained the really valuable positive proposals for action of one kind or another. But how far they go beyond anything that would be conceivable under the leadership of the backward-looking Mr. King may be realized by merely mentioning that Professor Kenneth Taylor suggests the capital levy, Professor H. M. Cassidy works out an elaborate scheme for an Employment Stabilization Board, and Mr. Lewis Duncan presents a proposal to make milk distribution a public utility. The visiting professors from abroad must, however, have been very comforting to the politicians after these disturbing ideas from the native-born. Professor Gregory assured them that it was the Liberals and no other party who had created and sustained the modern world; and Professor MacIver, speaking about the chal-

lenge of the modern age, did not seem to think that it challenges us to do anything beyond affirming that there is a challenge.

On the whole, the Conservative book has more meat in it. It is also distinguished from its rival by its success in escaping from the deadly solemnity which characterizes most Canadian attempts to be serious. In the final paper in the volume the Hon. W. H. Price, in a discussion marked by sustained irony and humour, demonstrates that Section 98 of the Criminal Code is in accordance with British traditions, and tells his audience that 'we have succeeded in prying the C.C.F. away from the idea that force must be used to get changes in government' and that 'you will hunt in vain through the columns of the censored and servile press of Russia for one single paragraph critical of the government of the day'. But I doubt if any of the young Tories laughed.

FRANK H. UNDERHILL

THE LOST GENERATION

THE TESTAMENT OF YOUTH, by Vera Brittain (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 661; \$3.00).

THE Testament of Youth is the common testament of all those who lost their youth, though not their life, in the war, never to recover it; of the generation that was just reaching maturity in 1914. It is fully and frankly autobiographical, yet completely free from exhibitionism or any sense of self-importance, in itself no small achievement. Born and bred in a provincial atmosphere where higher education for women was frowned on when not openly derided, Vera Brittain had just won her battle to secure it for herself—and she gives us a very vivid picture of the long struggle—when the war broke out. The first year of it she spent at Oxford. Then, when she could bear academic retirement no longer, she enlisted as a V.A.D. and spent the rest of the time till the armistice in various hospitals in England, in Malta, and in France. She was engaged, and lost her betrothed; she lost her brother whom she loved; his other intimate friends and hers had gone before him.

By means of extracts from letters and diaries she recreates with startling clarity, as anyone who has lived and thought during those years will testify, the strange hysterical confusion of the early months; the hesitant doubts that insinuated themselves into youthful minds as time went on; the grief and the despair; the deadly routine and the dull discomforts, so frequently quite unnecessary, of a nurse's life; the boredom and disillusion of the last years; and the final harrowing despair of a barbaric peace. Then the rebirth from despair to sanity, that slow and painful process never quite completed for her generation, is told with the same simple and convincing frankness, with the same wealth of sentiment without sentimentality. We see her at Oxford again, feeling herself 'an unwanted survivor,' we follow the beginnings of her literary career, how she came to work for peace and the emancipation of women (which, unlike the less intelligent of her sex, she knows well to be far from realised) as the two movements that still seem worth while. This led her to travel to Geneva and Central Europe. And the tale closes with her approaching marriage.

The whole is shot through with vivid glimpses of events and personalities: tales from the front in letters or on the lips of the wounded, the sinking of a ship in the Mediterranean, the rich charm and comparative peace of Malta, the rush and horror of the base hospital at Etaples, the hectic gambols of the superpatriots, the lonely grandeur of a brother's grave in the Italian mountains, the weary agony of waiting for news from France that did not come; all that was the war as intelligent women suffered it, of all this the author has given us a faithful and a moving picture. For this is one of those few war books that are historical documents of the first importance and equally important as literary masterpieces.

G. M. A. GRUBE.

POETIC FORM

KEATS' CRAFTSMANSHIP, by M. R. Ridley (Oxford University Press; pp. 312; \$4.50).

'THE more one studies Keats' letters,' says Mr. Ridley in his introduction, 'the more, I think, one becomes convinced that the critics who are not too proud to accept Keats' self-analysis are wiser than those who, prompted by a serene vanity and a misplaced confidence in their own analytical powers, present us with a Keats in their own image.' It was time that some clear-sighted modestly objective scholar called a halt to that sort of criticism which, pretending to reach into secret and mysterious places in the poet's mind, has merely tricked us into thinking that we are learning something new and difficult about Keats when really what is being exposed to us is the simple one-track mind of the interpreter. Mr. Ridley's impatience with the antics of Amy Lowell and the breezy generalizations of Sir Sidney Colvin—to name only the dead—has the best of results: he wastes little time in confuting their errors and he keeps his eyes fixed upon the text of Keats.

It is not easy in a review to suggest the value or even the precise character of his book: one cannot reproduce a sample of the long passages of illuminating comment on details of the poet's art, or of rigorous argument concerning its sources and models; and these passages do not lend themselves to summarizing. All that one can hope to do is to indicate the main contributions Mr. Ridley has made to the comprehension of Keats' craftsmanship.

First among these I should rank his account of the invention of that stanza which, with almost insignificant variations, Keats uses in all the great odes except that to Psyche. No other critic has shown so clearly how the Petrarchan and Shakespearian sonnets are blended to produce the mighty stanza in which Keats achieves his finest sustained effects. And a comparison with Matthew Arnold's less expert use of a closely related stanza in the Oxford elegies completes the demonstration of the delicate exactness with which Keats manipulates his invention. Only less important is Mr. Ridley's disproof of the current belief that in 'Lamia' Keats adopts the heroic couplet as practised by Dryden in the 'Fables.' By painstaking analysis of Keats' pauses and enjambments Mr. Ridley convinces us that the metre of 'Lamia' is very remote from the neater, lighter, swifter couplet of Dryden. The chapter on 'Lamia' suffers, one notes in passing, from the dan-

gerous doctrine that because a poem indicates a movement towards greater maturity it is superior to the works which had preceded it. All that one can say is that it gives promise of greater work to come; but Mr. Ridley will have it that intrinsically 'Lamia' is a finer poem than 'The Eve of Saint Agnes.'

Less important, perhaps, but at least as interesting are the pages of serried argument in which Mr. Ridley demonstrates that the Crewe manuscript of the 'Ode to the Nightingale' cannot be the first draft as has been supposed. At several points in the book he offers plausible readings of some of the heavily barred words in the manuscripts. And last, but how far from least! one must thank him for reproducing manuscript versions of the poems, some nowhere accessible in print, others difficult of access to readers who are far from the chief collections. The book is indispensable to the student of English poetic form.

E. K. BROWN

THE EVANGEL OF SINGLE TAX

THE PHILOSOPHY OF HENRY GEORGE, by G. R. Geiger (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xiii, 581; \$3.50).

THE most impressive passage in this book is the description of the death of George. He was at the time independent candidate for the New York mayoralty; he was told explicitly by his doctor that the strain might prove fatal; but he accepted the task as a duty, spoke four times in one evening and succumbed to a stroke early next morning. 'The election was almost forgotten in the city's grief, and as the body lay in state all of Sunday in the Grand Central Palace the world paid its homage to the power of sincerity. One hundred thousand mourners filed before his bier, while another hundred thousand, unable to gain admittance, prayed in the street outside.'

This was a striking testimony to the power of sincerity. For George lived and worked without the help of a distinguished pedigree or the glamour of wealth; he was always a poor man, fighting the battles of poor men with sympathy and courage. His success in gaining recognition for what was in its nature a crusade may be more intelligible if we recall the background of the American scene in 1897. The social and economic system of the United States was certainly dominated by wealth and intrigue; but there was a looseness of texture in the life of the country, a verbose exaltation of democracy as still capable of achieving the millenium, and enough sense of adventure to make possible a career like that of George. For personality, the qualities of the self-educated man and what remained to the end 'little Harry's fad' were the whole equipment of this gallant fighter. No one could study his life without feeling genuine enthusiasm for the courage which struggled against poverty and sickness, or read the denunciations of economic inequality without feeling how indisputably right were his sentiments. But it is impossible not to feel that the simplicity of his outlook was never quite equal to the complexity of his problem. His declaration that 'for the study of political economy you need no special knowledge, no extensive library, no costly laboratory; you do not need even textbooks or teachers,

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if you will but think for yourselves' is not merely the self-defence of a man without academic training, but the manifesto of a thinker with only one ruling idea. George could grow and learn, but he spent his life in learning and growing instead of beginning his active life with an adequate store of information. It may be true that 'a monkey with a microscope, a mule packing a library, are fit emblems of the men—and, unfortunately they are plenty—who pass through the whole educational machinery and come out but learned fools'. At the same time a denunciation of education based on the example of those who failed to get it is not logically convincing; its value consisted chiefly in preventing George from becoming a professor of economics at the University of California, where he would probably have been effectively buried. In justice to this critic of academic learning let us record that his one great effort, *Progress and Poverty*, 'created a demand that sent its sales later into the millions of copies and made it a rival of the most successful works of fiction'. It was translated into all the important languages of Europe and into Chinese.

Dr. Geiger has given us a book on Henry George which is completely adequate. As the title indicates it is concerned particularly with the philosophy of George. Sixty pages are devoted to the biography in which we have a detailed account of his gradual rise to fame and international recognition. His writings brought him into contact with the leaders of the Irish movement and as a supporter of the Irish National Land League he went to Ireland in 1881. As an orator he achieved the success of a man who

could speak with power and conviction so that he 'was ranked by the *London Times* as the oratorical peer of Cobden and Bright'. From Ireland he went to London and mixed in the social life of that decade; very naturally he did not feel kindly disposed toward Herbert Spencer, whom he judged to be 'going insane from vanity'.

After the biographical section there is a series of elaborate chapters on George's background and originality, his socialism, his relation to Herbert Spencer, his religion and his influence. After this first part there is a second part on economics and ethics, on George's ethical solution of the social problem, and an epilogue which suggests tentatively that the challenge to ethics is perhaps more crucial than the criticism of economics.

A just estimate of this book demands the admission that it gives more than one sign of inflation. The author has built around the figure of Henry George, and on the foundation of sentences often commonplace in themselves, a structure of his own, made up partly of the teachings of Professor Dewey, partly of independent economic doctrines, and partly of discursive comments on the growth of American civilization. All these things have their value, but the impression left by many pages of the book is that the main subject has been frequently subordinated to general problems of social philosophy which would have been quite as relevant in any other context. In the third chapter, for example, there is what the author rightly calls a 'lengthy discussion', concerned with Professor Davenport's book on *The Economics of Enterprise*. As this book appeared in 1919, twenty-two years after the death of George, it belongs properly to a general discussion of economic theories and its treatment here suggests a lack of restraint. The temptation to wander into adjacent topics is particularly great in the case of Henry George, largely because a social doctrine is usually replete with excellent suggestions that are inevitable. There is a significant quotation (p. 565) of some remarks made by Professor Seligman when he repudiated George's attack on economists as people who were always 'truckling to the powers that be'. 'If we thought' said Seligman, 'you had solved the problem, we would enthrone you high on our council seats, we would reverently bend the knee and acknowledge in you a master, a prophet'. That seems to raise the final and crucial question, which demands an answer. The economic and the ethical problems are bound up in a total social theory. But ethical appeals do not solve economic problems. It is admitted in many parts of the book that George did not solve his problem; his own country 'affords the most disappointment to his followers'. In plain language, George had in him the making of an ethical philosopher, a social reformer, and an evangelical preacher. When he finished his book he says, 'in the dead of night, when I was entirely alone, I flung myself on my knees and wept like a child; the rest was in the Master's hands'. This strain of evangelical fervour was, doubtless, an element of strength in George the enthusiast, the orator, the idealist. It did not help George to understand why he was neglected by the economists. It does help us to understand the character of the man who felt his calling so intensely, who believed in the single tax as a gospel truth, and did not succeed in

his real mission, which was to change the heart of mankind and thereby once for all end the want and poverty which as yet neither religion nor ethics nor economics has been able to annihilate. It is indisputably true that the problems tackled by George are vital problems of the present day, mainly because they have been the problems of every age. But a comprehensive survey of the work of Henry George and its relation to his times was worth doing, and Dr. Geiger has done it on a large scale in a way that will make his book indispensable to all interested in the subject.

G. S. BRETT

FREEDOM OF THE BIRDS

ICARO, by Lauro de Bosis, with a translation from the Italian by Ruth Draper, and a preface by Gilbert Murray (Oxford University Press; pp. 201; \$2.50).

THE TRAGEDY OF MAN, by Imre Madach, translated from the Hungarian by Charles Sanger (Hogarth Press; pp. 155; 6/-).

THE night of October 3, 1931, was a beautiful warm evening in Rome. The streets were crowded, the cafes filled, and the after-dinner hour gave signs of being ample, Roman, filled with incident. Suddenly there came over the city an aeroplane, flying so low that the people turned and stared, and from it, scattered far and wide by the hand of a lone aviator, there rained pamphlets protesting against fascism and the infringement of man's liberties. For a few minutes the plane, like some eager, hurried bird pausing in flight, flew over the city, then it swept upward and was lost in the night. And that was the last that was heard of Lauro de Bosis.

Among his posthumous papers was found the manuscript of *Icaro*, written in the form of a Greek tragedy, the story of another great flight, which has now been given to us in this beautiful edition. It is a lofty and heroic drama, written by a man who later lived it, and by a man who was not, as Professor Murray points out, a sensationalist or one who sought a foolhardy death. Lauro de Bosis believed in liberty fervently and intensely, and the drama he left behind, beautifully translated by Miss Draper, tells the story of Icarus in noble and dignified verse, and is filled with the same romantic spirit which a century ago swept the continent. How else can we explain such sentiments as these, which may seem trite to our scientific Marxists, but which throb with a genuine and fine emotion:—

Icarus: It is then the dawn of the times of which I dreamed? Father, will not the wings, perhaps, at last sweep away all barriers from the prone earth, will they not bring to men divided and blinded by hate the blue freedom of the birds, and make them all one family under one sky?

The drama bristles with such lovely phrases as 'the blue freedom of the birds'. In the light of the author's life and death its sincerity and conviction glow with an added brightness from every page.

Where this play is the tragedy of a man, the play translated from the Hungarian undertakes to tell the tragedy of man. An Hungarian classic, which, we are told has been performed some 500 times in the last thirty years in the Hungarian National The-

atre, it shows Adam glimpsing the future from Paradise. Now we see him in Egypt, now in Athens, now in Imperial Rome, and now in Constantinople at the time of the Crusades. He is Danton in the shadow of the guillotine and an old Englishman by the Tower of London. He is timeless, immortal, ever reborn. Eve crops up through the ages as well, in a variety of roles, always by Adam's side. It is a long and rambling drama in fifteen scenes, filled with philosophical arguments and with much fuss rather halting to the action. That it is strong and imaginative, however, there is no doubt. The translation gives the impression of being rather too literal; while done into verse there is no essential rhythm and the language used is lacking in richness and tonality. Both plays in their English form seem destined rather for the library than the theatre.

LEON EDEL

STAMP OF GENIUS

COLLECTED POEMS, Volume I., by V. Sackville-West (Hogarth Press; pp. 325; 10/6).

WITH Miss Sackville-West there persists in English poetry the glory of light and of flying wings, the rut of earth, the feel of the soil, the music and ring of the authentic English tongue. Mr. Housman and Mr. Gide may cherish and enjoy their humid cisterns, but give me the song that tells of a glistening world, a magic world, an intelligent world:—

My Saxon weald! my cool and candid weald!
Dear God! the heart, the very heart of me
That plays and strays, a truant in strange lands,
Always returns and finds its inward peace,
Its swing of truth, its measure of restraint,
Here among meadows, orchards, lanes and shaws.

The poet may be singing of Kent but I may possess my secret thoughts as my deepest fibres stir in me. The significance of her world arises from relation, not from contradiction, and the depths and the mysteries lie in these relations, not in the exteriorisation of a temperament. So the poet moulds our life to 'all the daily and the lovely things' with their 'quick magic of significance' and creates in us the inner intimacies with this gleaming spectacle, acrid and angelic, of which the surprise of the heart, the barnacle goose and the cygnet swan, the western sky's foundry of bronze, the bull and the ruttish night, the turning of the heavy loam are all a part:—

Beauty, and use, and beauty once again
Link up my scattered heart, and shape a scheme
Commensurate with a frustrated gleam.

Somewhere the author suggests that she is not just the latest thing in poets—'a damned outmoded poet' is the phrase which runs in memory. A challenge, of course, and not an apology, for while she might have indulged herself and us in the ribald nonsense or the derisive cachinnation or the patterned humanitarianism or the social humbug of our modish rhymesters, she makes the poet say:—

I'll not be parsimonious of my wealth,
I'll fill your heaven with many coloured moons
And hang such variable tides upon them
As strew the astonished fish along the shores.

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REGINA, SASK.

If that is rhetoric it is sound rhetoric, and the following is authentic song:—

How shall I haunt her separate sleep,
That in the glades of night
Her dreams may keep a tryst with mine,
And be not parted quite?

Only, some echo of his speech,
Melodious on the air,
Shall tremble still against her heart,
My secret messenger.

Genius is the thing which stamps the commonplace with the timeless mode. Discontinuity and syncope and caprice do not belong to Miss Sackville-West's poetic sensibility. She never prostitutes her worship nor turns aside to sophisticated substitutes. Nor does she pretend to eviscerate the subconscious that she may pose as the prophet of a new religion. She would not intone her loyalties as if the National Anthem were a funeral dirge nor pay her homage to love as if 'Drink to me only with thine eyes' were a lullaby for a twilight sleep. Her world is not one of fictional mysteries or of sentimental pretence. It is, on the one hand, a represented world, the beauties of which repose in the full intuition of a harmonious personality and, on the other, a world of emotions directly presented by an exquisitely vital brilliance of sound, colour, and image. Such a combination of means when at their most intense point ranges certain of her poems among the ever-remembered things.

In this volume Miss Sackville-West has included poems old and new in almost equal numbers and

has arranged them according to general subject, which is a happy way of bringing the reader into more direct touch with the nature and diversity of her sensibility. That magnificent bucolic 'The Land' heads a group of poems, specifically English in immediate reference, among which will be found the splendid dream 'Sissinghurst'. Then the movement narrows somewhat into the personal experiences of the sections 'Abroad' (in which the exotic is largely a variant on the native theme) and 'People', widening out again emotionally and ending with the brilliant series of gleaming symbols entitled 'King's Daughter', published first in 1929. Careless workmanship is not one of Miss Sackville-West's characteristics, and once a poem is ready for publication little improvement is possible. I have noticed, however, a few alterations in this edition which, slight as they are, throw some light on the author's temperament. '(Sweeping) her little harp' was really intolerable in 'King's Daughter' and has become 'a shapely harp'. So, in 'my lovely messenger' the lushy blurr has been purified by substituting 'secret' for 'lovely'. A similar intellectualizing and strengthening of tone in the whole has resulted from certain rearrangements as, for example, the transfer of 'Dalmatia' to the section 'Abroad' from its original setting in 'King's Daughter'. Everyone who enjoys what is sometimes, by a metaphor, termed pure poetry will welcome this edition and look forward to succeeding volumes not merely because of convenience or of the new matter contained in them but because the earlier editions are not now to be had.

J. S. WILL

JUAN IN CALEDONIA

MAGNUS MERRIMAN, by Eric Linklater (Thos. Nelson & Sons; pp. 362; \$2.00).

ONE should, I know, forgive Mr. Linklater a great deal. The author who gives to a jaded world two such tonics as *Poet's Pub* and *Juan in America* has an unanswerable claim upon our gratitude and our forbearance. It is too bad that he should exercise that claim, but that is his own affair. His latest novel is an error of judgement which must be regretted by all his friends and admirers, but more in sorrow than in anger. Only, as one of them, I should like to give strong expression to my hope that it will not happen again.

The trouble, I think, has its roots in the success of *Juan in America*. Two elements combined to win for that book its enthusiastic reception—the robust hilarity of the hero's amorous adventures, and the inexhaustible opportunities for satire offered by the incomparably varied spectacle of American life. The temptation to repeat this formula must have been irresistible. Unfortunately, Scotland is not America, and Magnus Merriman is not Don Juan. As a Scot himself, Mr. Linklater is prevented from taking that detached sardonic view which enabled him to deal with America in terms of such high fantasy. An initial reverence inhibits him; he strives for satire, but it is a hollow pretence; Edinburgh and the Orkneys are shrines not lightly to be defamed, however determined his effort at unbelief. As for Magnus, the effort to make him a comic tragedian fails because of his utter inadequacy. There is

neither significance in his emotions nor point to his adventures. He writes, gets drunk, fights in public over the relative merits of Shakespeare and Racine, contests an election as a Scottish Nationalist, wanders aimlessly between journalism and literature, and ends up as a farmer. Between times he becomes involved in a series of bedroom episodes, most of them unsatisfactory. None of it really matters. The characters are too unimportant and their actions too unconvincing. Mr. Linklater might just as well have spared himself the trouble.

At the root of it is a lack of imagination. This is a strange thing to say of the author of *Poet's Pub*; but in this case it is only too true. In *Juan in America* his impressions and experiences lent themselves to translation into uproarious fantasy. His experiences since his return to Britain must have been more dour; certainly they have successfully resisted his effort at a similar process of translation. And in spite of his explicit denial, the present volume is only too obviously a hodge-podge of impressions suggested by his own experience. The really amusing incidents are few and far between; and not even an effort to revive one or two of the characters of *Poet's Pub*—an effort as desperate as it is unjustified—can clothe the drabness of his invention. Judged purely on its own merits, the book is innocuous and uninspired. Judged as a product of Mr. Linklater's pen, it is a calamity which should not be repeated.

EDGAR MCINNIS

MATHEMATICAL MENTALISM

THE NEW BACKGROUND OF SCIENCE, by Sir James Jeans (Cambridge University Press; Macmillans in Canada; pp. 303; \$2.00).

IN this new volume which the author says contains 'an amplification and clarification of parts of my earlier small book, *The Mysterious Universe*,' Sir James Jeans outlines the present situation of theoretical physics 'against a roughly sketched background of rudimentary philosophy—the philosophy of a scientist, not of a metaphysician—'. He suggests that 'the re-orientation of scientific thought will probably be away from the materialism and strict determinism which characterized nineteenth century physics, towards something which will accord better with our everyday experience'.

It may be conceded at once that the philosophy is rudimentary, but it is unfortunate that it should be labelled the philosophy of a scientist, and not of a metaphysician, since it might be understood to imply that the scientist's philosophy is necessarily rudimentary, and that somehow it is not associated with metaphysics, a department of thought at which scientists are usually disposed to scoff. The fact is, of course, that scientists who claim to be above metaphysics are as Dr. Woodger has said in his *Principles of Biology*, 'only a little way above it, being up to their necks in it', mostly without realizing it. The scientist who begins to philosophize—and what scientist does not?—at once becomes a metaphysician, and generally an indifferent one. It has become all too common for the trained philosopher to refer to the 'half-baked metaphysics' of the scientist, while the scientist is all too ready to dismiss the dialectic and logic-chopping of the metaphysician as mere moonshine. The unconscious metaphysics of

the scientist is perhaps the greater evil, just because it is unconscious.

The mathematical metaphysic which Sir James Jeans is inclined to champion and which he put forward in *The Mysterious Universe* has a long and reputable history. Pepler, the great exponent of it in the 17th century, asserted, as Sir James Jeans does today, that the Deity thinks in mathematical terms and the universe is the expression of this thought. It appeared to be a reasonable hope that, following *The Mysterious Universe*, Sir James would give us a sustained and logical exposition of scientific mentalism, a substantial contribution to a metaphysic of science. But the present work does not fulfil this expectation. It may be an 'amplification' but it is not a 'clarification' of that portion of his earlier work which deals with the philosophic implications of modern physical theories. As a popular exposition of the principles of the present-day physics, it calls for no particular criticism. Sir James shows his usual facility in presenting difficult mathematico-physical ideas in an engaging fashion. It is in the attempt to pursue these ideas to their metaphysical lairs that he is less convincing and patently illogical.

Without going into a detailed criticism of his arguments, and being merely content to point out the objectionable use of question-begging analogies, it may be urged in a general way that the Principle of Relativity, as developed by Einstein, does not logically lead to a mathematical metaphysic of Nature, but to some kind of physical realism. Since space-time is determined by matter, space-time cannot be absolute any more than can space or time each by itself. We do not discard our 'human spectacles' when we abandon the idea of absolute space, and absolute time, and take to that of space-time. We simply pass with more refined observation of phenomena to a wider correlating generalization but this generalization is still a human product, a conceptual instrument, by means of which we deal with the complexity of Nature, that Nature of which man himself is a part. The relativity of space-time to matter is shown in Quantum Mechanics, where it appears that in the analysis of sub-atomic phenomena, space-time is an inadequate co-ordinate system for electronic events. Hence the emergence of the uncertainty principle, and probability interpretations. It is not that Nature is indeterministic, or that there is no such thing as causation. It means only that the principle of physical determinism which is derived from the study of large scale phenomena, fails to give results in the sub-atomic realm.

It is true that Nature is mathematical in a more subtle and penetrating way than was dreamed of by Plato, Kepler, or Galileo. But it is also true that she is physical in a more profound and baffling sense than either Galileo, or Newton, or the whole tribe of 19th century atomists conceived. Furthermore, the organic aspects of Nature, of which Sir James takes inadequate notice, but which Professor Whitehead has emphasized, demand an interpretation which is difficult on either a purely physical or mentalist basis. It is noteworthy that Whitehead, who, by reason of his own theory of Relativity which differs from Einstein's, might be justified in proposing a mathematical mentalism, prefers an organic philosophy of Nature. It is only by a *tour de force* that

Eddington and Jeans, who apparently accept the Einstein relativity view, set up a mathematical philosophy of the idealist type. There are difficulties with all these Nature philosophies, but if a choice has to be made, it would seem to be between a physical philosophy and an organic or functional one.

S. BASTERFIELD.

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SHORT NOTICES

IBN SA'UD, THE PURITAN KING OF ARABIA, by Kenneth Williams (Cape-Nelson; pp. 290 and index; \$2.75).

One of the most forceful and attractive figures of the contemporary Islamic world is Abdul Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, restorer of the Wahhabi kingdom in Central Arabia, who by his military exploits, the astuteness of his policies and the strength of his character has brought the greater part of the Arabian peninsula under his effective government. Kenneth Williams' biography is a conscientious compilation from the works of other writers. It has neither the sparkle of Ameen Rihani's *Maker of Modern Arabia* nor the comprehensiveness and weight of H. St. John Philby's various works. Yet the hurried reader in search of factual information will find the new biography more conveniently arranged than Rihani's, while the casual reader will digest it more easily than Philby's extended accounts. For both reasons it is an acceptable addition to current literature on Arabia.

Perhaps the most useful feature of the book is its discussion of relations between Ibn Sa'ud and the British. Westerners who succumbed to the Lawrence tradition have a notoriously unfinished conception of the Arabian scene. Lawrence himself has chafed under the curious misunderstandings occasioned by the popularity of *Revolt in the Desert*. That book dealt with only one phase of wartime activity in Arabic-speaking territories. The author can hardly be blamed if an uninformed public, carried away by the extraordinary beauty and the dramatic quality of his prose, refused to look further to discover what less eloquent persons had been doing in Arabia at the same time. Kenneth Williams' account, frankly partisan, but all the more valuable because it reflects the strong feelings of Ibn Sa'ud's supporters, suggests one of the many stories which should supplement *Revolt in the Desert*. For a fuller account one must go to Philby.

There is a certain unevenness in the quality of Mr. Williams' writing, as if he had been receptive to impressions from Doughty, Rihani, Lawrence, the newspaper world, and perhaps a few other sources, and had not yet discovered a vehicle which suited all his own requirements. Readers should not permit the tentativeness of his style to cloud their confidence, however, for his account is faithful to the records given us by established authorities.

E. P. M.

THE MEMOIRS OF THE RT. HON. SIR GEORGE FOSTER, by W. S. Wallace (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 291; \$3.50).

The Foster who emerges from these pages is rather too much the garrulous sentimentalist of old age, who looks back upon a blameless life of service, from the days of the temperance orator to those of the League of Nations advocate. His biographer hardly makes clear how he won his reputation for being the kind of fighter who makes enemies and glories in the fact; and while there is a good account of the Nest of Traitors episode, the story of the Union Trust scandal surely overdoes the reticence which the prudent biographer is bound to observe. The book is most valuable for the correspondence which it prints concerning the making of the Borden Cabinet in 1911. Here is revealed a very pretty struggle between the Bank of Commerce and Canadian Northern group who eventually won the appointment to the post of Finance for their man against the opposition of Foster's supporters who were mainly the Bank of Montreal, and the public ownership conservatives of Toronto. Seldom have any of our Canadian political biographies provided us with a more illuminating sidelight upon the relations of business and politics. After 1914 Foster saw a good deal of the politics of the war from behind the scenes. His insight does not seem to have been remarkable. He saw through the hollow pretences of the statesmen who set reparations at an impossible level; but he entered whole-heartedly into the schemes of the Paris conference of 1916 to boycott German trade after the war, and he led the opposition to General Smuts in the British delegation when the latter wanted to revise the terms imposed on Germany more along the lines of the Fourteen Points. We have so far had very little inside information about what our Canadian delegates really did at Paris in 1919. One wonders if they were all as short-sighted as Foster, or if there were any of them who came away from Paris with the feeling of sick disgust which we now know was the reaction of practically all the decent Englishmen and Americans who took part in the peace negotiations.

F. H. U.

BETHOVEN AS HE LIVED, by Richard Specht, translated by Alfred Kalisch (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 370; \$4.50).

In the late Richard Specht's *Beethoven as He Lived*—admirably done into English, by the distinguished critic and journalist Mr. Alfred Kalisch—the author frankly sets out, as he states in his

preface, to breathe the breath of life into his subject, by refashioning what is known of him. To re-create Beethoven the man, with all his faults and failings, his imperfections, and his very human humanity, using his familiar knowledge of the master's works as literary, rather than as musical exposition, to advance the reasons for the faith he holds.

The author makes no attempt to spare his subject in frankness of criticism, either as man or artist, and by this frankness of method he gives us a conception of the man Beethoven, which transcends any musical comparison, either to prove or to disprove the artist from the man.

If we would follow Specht's estimate, we must see and hear Beethoven at all times, with the eyes and ears of the artist. The author makes clear, and clear to satisfaction, the familiar confusion, which arises in people's minds, when they endeavour, in comparing creative musicians, to compare the incomparable, or when they confuse the temperament of the artist, with that very different thing, the artistic temperament. The artistic temperament had no place in Beethoven, the creative artist, and but little in Beethoven the man.

Specht's analysis of the artist's temperament may here be quoted:—

We find (in Beethoven) oneness of music and life, the self chastisement of an unbridled will, the taming of all passion and contradiction, till all turns to ethical beauty. He was the first musician who realized new birth through transformation, the morphology of sound and existence, the ascent from the child-like to the highest stages, and he has transmuted his conception into music. In him were lastingly united music and a life which was cyclopean, gnarled, uncouth and merry; human experience, tragic and solitary, full of shamefaced laughter, at odds with the abject meanness of the work-a-day world, victorious only when he fled to his own realms of sound.

There we feel the *Sturm und Drang* of the artist's mind, the stupendous genius of pains for creative work, and sturdy self-criticism of his own gifts and aspirations. Specht in brilliant and erudite fashion reveals to us the great composer in his loftiest flights of musical inspiration, in his violent and almost desperate agony to be loved and understood, his volcanic impatience in remorse at erratic trifling with life or its gifts, in himself, or in others: his grief and disappointment at ingratitude, his impatience with stupidity, his joy when understood; the child in the man battling with a tireless brain glowing with ardent impulses, that impelled the composer on and on to almost impossible aspirations for achievement.

We feel too the tragedy of deafness, of outward hearing, and yet we sense, perhaps, that this may not have been in Beethoven the real affliction it might seem, for the inner hearing of the musician is his greatest gift, the world in which his thoughts are dematerialized in concepts.

This is the valley of longing for all creative artists, the region where dawns are always rising and suns never set. This book is not a biography, it is not a history, we cannot even say that it is the real Beethoven. But it can be said, and said heartily and admiringly that it reflects in a very powerful way, the effect of Beethoven on his contemporaries, on the development of the art of music to life, and the great gift of Beethoven's music to humanity.

J. C. McI.

THE KEY TO FREEDOM AND SECURITY IN INDIA, by an Indian Student (Oxford University Press; pp. 297; \$1.75).

This book contains a realistic analysis of Indian conditions, an incisive criticism of proposed British reforms, and suggestions for the 'freedom and security of India'. The recent Round Table Conference in London attempted to solve India's defence problem by the replacement of British soldiers by Indians, when the real issue was how may the Indian army be made responsible to the Indian legislature? The franchise question was settled by political arithmetic—an increase in the percentage of voters, which merely enlarges the existing oligarchy. Similarly the problems of finance, administrative services, and the question of minorities were not solved in a forthright manner. In every case both the British and Indian delegates seem to have studiously avoided the central issue. Apparently the latter wanted to appear as Indian patriots, but did not want to give up their economic and social advantages.

The author realizes the numerous dangers facing the new India—especially the danger of being ruled by a 'propertied oligarchy'. To avoid these difficulties he makes several suggestions—the main one being the political education of the masses of the Indians by the introduction of local government, that is, the introduction of freedom from below in addition to freedom from above. In the local, provincial, and central governments there should be different franchises based on public service as well as on property and literacy. He believes the solution of the problem of minorities' representation is in the division of the electoral areas into one majority party constituency, and one

joint-minority parties constituency; and at stated intervals the voters may change from one to the other.

But would these remedies solve India's problems? Though the author constantly reminds the reader of the danger of property owners ruling in their own interest, he forgets that they are now in control and that even if the scheme he proposes were put into effect the 'propertied oligarchy' through its economic power would still retain effective control as in all other capitalist countries. He assumes, too, that the existing political system in Britain, with its paraphernalia of elections, government, and opposition, is the apex of political wisdom. Moreover, the world is changing rapidly and before many years Fascism or Communism may completely alter the situation in India. Yet, so far as any improvement of India's problems under the existing economic and secret system is possible, the author's solution seems superior to most.

N. P.

GORDON IN CHINA, by Bernard M. Allen (Macmillans in Canada; pp. lx, 222; \$2.50).

Dr. Bernard Allen, whose book on Gordon and the Sudan is the standard biography, has completed the picture with this account of the adventurous years in China which first established Gordon's reputation. In it he shows as a biographer those same qualities of honesty and common sense which are so welcome after the pious or malicious accounts of the 'Christian Hero'.

The book opens in July, 1860, with Captain Gordon on board the P. & O. steamer *Valetta*, passing the coast of Sicily, where Garibaldi and his Thousand have recently landed; and closes four years later with General Gordon leading his 'Ever Victorious Army' through the breach at Changchow, the last important stronghold of the Taiping rebels.

The actual operations under Gordon's command lasted only eighteen months, yet they served to crush a civil war that had devastated the richest province of China for fifteen years. An area of some twenty thousand square miles, with a population of twenty million, of which some six million non-combatants had perished at the hands of the rebels; was reconquered with an army that averaged three thousand men. The large Imperial forces, poorly led and poorly equipped, served chiefly to occupy the cities stormed by Gordon's troops. A small but well-disciplined army with adequate artillery, rendered mobile by

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river gun-boats and led by a military genius proved too much for unnumbered thousands of Taipings, equipped with modern rifles and aided by American and European adventurers.

It is an amazing exploit, admirably told, and illustrated by Gordon's own sketch maps. General Gordon is one of the most attractive figures of the Victorian Century, and this account of his earlier career is very welcome.

A. G.

HOSANNA, by Bernard Newman (Denis Archer; pp. 287; 7/6).

This is an unhistorical novel, based on an attempt to construct such a situation as might have resulted had Jesus allowed himself to be made King by the Jews. No one would expect to find any signs of intelligence in such a book, but this writer has not even the justification of knowledge—he obviously knows nothing about the period or the people whereof he writes, except the names of a few individuals and of the chief Jewish sects. His characters have about the same degree of liveliness as those of the average Sunday school magazine, and there is at times the disgusting prurience that can only be achieved by a certain unhealthy type of virtuosity. In short, the book is utter trash. It is a pity such stuff can find a publisher.

F. W. B.

THE ENCHANTED VILLAGE, by Edward Shanks (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 278; \$2.00).

The Enchanted Village is a slight book, though not an insignificant one. Sureness of touch and finish of style give support to the slim theme. Even at that, there is in the book material rather for a short story than for a novel.

The village of enchantment is East Mariner, which 'throws its spell over everyone who comes into it'. The group

of prosperous Londoners who have settled there, acutely conscious of the strangeness of their environment, react to it, making a hobby of village life. For some twenty-four hours one watches them at it—cricket-game, fire-work display, barn-dance, to the accompaniment of cocktails and sophistication. Beneath the ill-fitting disguise of placid rustic life, their real selves show through, restlessness and intrigue coming occasionally to the surface, to reveal a collection of dissatisfied, rather uninteresting people. The fact that Mr. Shanks so subtly shows up their real selves does not make them the more worth exposing. Such facility as his deserves a worthier foil.

M. A. C.

BOOKS RECEIVED

The listing of a book in this column does not preclude a more extended notice in this or subsequent issues.

CANADIAN

CANADA, 1934 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics; pp. 192).

THESE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, by W. H. Alexander, E. K. Broadus, F. J. Lewis and J. M. MacEachran (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 113; \$1.50).

GENERAL

PATMORE, by Frederick Page (Oxford University Press; pp. 184; \$1.75).

THE PLANNING OF AGRICULTURE, by Viscount Astor and Keith A. H. Murray (Oxford University Press; pp. xvi, 186; \$1.75).

WORK OF ART, by Sinclair Lewis (Doubleday, Doran & Gundy; pp. 452; \$2.50).

CHARLES DICKENS, HIS LIFE AND WORK, by Stephen Leacock (Doubleday, Doran & Gundy; pp. 322; \$3.00).

THE LETTERS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, 1817-1819, edited by H. J. C. Grierson (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xvi, 509; \$6.25).

MAGNUS MERRIMAN, by Eric Linklater (Thomas Nelson; pp. 362; \$2.00).

LEN SA'UD, by Kenneth Williams (Thomas Nelson; pp. 299; \$2.75).

DAYS WITHOUT END, by Eugene O'Neill (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 157; \$3.00).

BABYLONIAN NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENT, by Jessie Douglas Kerruish (Denis Archer; pp. 287; 7/6).

THE CASE FOR POLYGAMY, by J. E. Clare McFarlane (Search; pp. 159; 5-/-).

PERIWAKE, by Leslie A. Paul (Denis Archer; pp. xi, 257; 7/6).

THE PRINCIPLES AND PROBLEMS OF FEDERAL FINANCE, by B. P. Adarkar (P. S. King; pp. xv, 301; 12/6).

THE UNITED STATES AND THE CARIBBEAN AREA, by Dana G. Munro (World Peace Foundation; pp. viii, 322; \$2.00).

SOVIET RUSSIA, 1917-1933, by Vera Micheles Dean (World Peace Foundation; pp. 40; \$.50).

THE ADVENTUROUS THIRTIES, by Janet E. Courtney (Oxford University Press; pp. vi, 279; \$2.50).

low attempts to pass judgement on religion without knowing what religion was about. Much confusion has been caused in recent years by people like this writer who feel that they are qualified to pass judgement on every conceivable subject, whether or no they are in possession of any facts concerning it. In order to correct certain erroneous impressions we would beg to point out some of the inadequacies of this article.

In the first place the writer fills two pages with a discussion of Marxism and religion without defining either terms. After following the argument for a little way the reason for this becomes apparent. He simply does not know what these terms mean. We find him evidently accepting what Karl Marx said about religion without examining it critically in his own day; for he attacks an attitude which has long since been discarded by religious leaders. In so doing he is placing himself in much the same position as his 'religious' predecessors who dogmatically asserted that the earth was flat because that view was supported by Scripture.

Mr. Secker goes on to tell us that religion is 'building an edifice far beyond the world on which men of science plant their feet'. It is true that a great part of the church has been concerned with the 'world beyond', but to assume that all religion is doing that is merely a refusal to face facts. Leaders of Liberal Christianity have been concerned mainly with the 'here-and-now' since the beginning of the present century. Let me quote a modern definition of religion by Professor Wieman of the Divinity School, Chicago University. 'Religion is man's acute awareness of unattained possibility and the behaviour that results from this awareness.' This does not refer to any 'beyond' but to present mundane possibilities.

He asserts triumphantly that 'Marxist thinkers were never a mythology', leaving the assumption that religious leaders were mythological characters. This is sheer hypothesis; the judgement of scholarly men seems to be that religious leaders too, were 'natural men, part of a natural world', and influencing the policies of that world. He also tells us the amazing truth that Marxists do not 'attempt to resurrect' their heroes. Had the writer any inkling of what was happening in religion he would know that Liberal Christians had abandoned that long ago.

He asks the astute question, 'Where are the communist deities?' One, at least, is in the Red Square in Moscow. To see the spectacle of thousands of people filing solemnly past the embalmed body of Lenin, and not to see



MARXISM A RELIGION — AN ANSWER

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM.
Sir:

During the past few months I have listened to various communists expound their views of life. I had eagerly anticipated meeting these bold, bad people; and had expected to find them hard-boiled, sophisticated realists, working entirely from facts. Imagine my disappointment when I found them as naive and gullible as the rest of us. Some talked enthusiastically about direct action as a means of changing the Canadian social order, when obviously there

are no direct actors. Others attacked religion without knowing what religion was about. Still others looked with contempt on the C.C.F. chiefly because its methods did not coincide with the accepted communist programme.

In order to get a little enlightenment on the Canadian situation I purchased a copy of THE CANADIAN FORUM. The first article which caught my attention was the one entitled 'Marxism and the Religious Attitude'. This was the last straw. How it got by the editor's wastepaper basket I do not know, unless it was felt that it would provoke further discussion of Marxism and Religion.

The article was another of those shal-

in the awed attitude towards that silent figure something of religion, is wilful blindness.

As for their attitude towards history, here also the Marxists walk by faith. They feel that the world is moving inevitably towards a time when 'the last shall be first and the first last'. This blissful state is coming whether the Marxists work for it or not. There is not a single example in history to prove that this assumption is correct, and their blind adherence to it reveals a faith as unquestioning as that of the most uncritical religionist.

If Marxism is not a religion, what makes the Marxists strive so ardently for a society which they know that they will never see? Is not this striving motivated by a 'consciousness of ideal ends'? Certainly they will gain nothing themselves. They will receive only the persecution and unpopularity which comes to all pioneers who seek something which the world does not understand nor desire. This intense sacrificial striving is of the essence of religion.

Many aspects of the Marxist religion inspire admiration in us. The fervour of its adherents, their sacrifice for an ideal, their ability to stand the gaff, and their uncompromising attitude towards evil (which is symbolized in Capitalism), are all challenging qualities.

The unfortunate part is that, like many other religious people, they are extremely narrow. They feel that their plan is the only method of salvation. Consequently they are very disagreeable people to cooperate with.

This point has already irritated me. Surely we have passed the stage where any group can honestly assert that its philosophy contains all of the truth. Mr. Secker alludes to this when he tells us that religious institutions are dependent upon the capitalist system. Of course they are. But so are the communists. Every single communist in Canada is dependent upon the present system for his living. The Christian religion can fight capitalism with just as much efficacy as the Marxist—and with just as much freedom—which isn't saying much.

Yours, etc.,

CARL J. GUSTAFSON

Montreal

EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM.
Sir:

At the provincial convention of the Alberta Federation of Home and School I was asked to present a report on education. The convention was held on

ORANGE PEKOE BLEND

"SALADA" TEA

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"Fresh from the Gardens"

November 28th, 1933. The report was well received, and was given some newspaper prominence. Today I received a request to submit it in written form, not exceeding four hundred words, to the secretary. The enclosed is the result.

It occurred to me that it might be of interest to you to know something of how our women are thinking, and the type of material that they are now prepared to listen to and to consider. I am, therefore, sending you on a copy.

Report on Education

It is generally realized by thoughtful persons that during the last twenty-five years, or since Alberta received its autonomy, the whole character of our civilization, of our economic structure, has essentially altered. We have passed from the era of production problems to the era of distribution problems. We are living in an age when a new civilization is being born. Old concepts reveal themselves as inadequate and misdirected or actually destructive of life-values.

Recently I received a reply to a letter of inquiry which I had written to the Department of Education at Edmonton. The letter informed me that public school services generally were being maintained throughout the Province during the depression. This continuance was made possible, it was explained, by reducing the salaries of teachers and other employees of school districts. No plan was disclosed in the letter for anything beyond the shrunken maintenance of present inadequate and outlived services, no thought to benefit by the great amount of educational experiment and research that has been carried out in all parts of the world, to expand

with the rapid evolution in human affairs.

In our present state of educational stale-mate we talk piously about changing the heart of man—and lack the courage to challenge a school system which produces and shapes (beyond hope of change) the individual.

With ready lip-service we uphold the ideal of developing social-mindedness (without which there can be no realization of the Christian ideal) and we retain a system of schooling which is based on the principles of individual survival and selfish interest.

We discourse at length on vocational guidance, knowing full well that all effective vocational guidance is defeated by the present economic system, which exists primarily for profit and scarcely at all for individual fulfilment.

The teaching staff, who alone understand the real problems and the limitations of the existing educational system, have no voice in determining conditions under which they work; possibly nothing is so unacceptable in a teacher, to the powers that be, as a challenging mind. Teachers' training, guided by the forces of reaction, tends to discourage original thought.

I have not space to enlarge but must add that there can be no challenge to wrong, misdirected trends in education that is not based upon a challenge to the principle of self-interest that is the very corner-stone of the profit-economy system. If we are to revivify our schools, we must go much deeper, we must remake our whole outmoded and discredited economic structure.

Yours, etc.,

ROBERTA C. PRICE

Calgary.

THURSDAY, *The Daily Mail* JANUARY 11, 1934.

Compton Mackenzie on A Novel that Shows "AVERAGE" LIFE Need Not be DULL

WHAT pleasure it is to come across a novel of which the technique is so sure that the reader is left at the end with the feeling that the book wrote itself. Such a novel is *Design for a Staircase*, by Guy Pocock (Dent, 7s. 6d.), published to-day.

The theme is a block of flats, the occupants of which, hitherto keeping themselves to themselves in the traditional English way, get acquainted with one another through a mild fire in the ground-floor flat on the right.

The story sounds so easy to tell as Mr. Pocock handles it, and perhaps only a fellow craftsman will realise what an amount of observation and experience and technical accomplishment are behind it.

The ingenuity with which Mr. Pocock has contrasted every household with another, the skill with which he has contrived simple incident to follow simple incident, the blending of humour and pathos without ever oversteering either, and the warmth of what I can only call "decent feeling" with which the whole is infused, have made *Design for a Staircase* a really delightful book.

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By Guy Pocock
(Third Impression)

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